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CONTENTS

INDIA

Bengal Minister Calls for Discussion of IMF Terms (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 28 Aug 81).....	1
Expected Terms for IMF Loan Deemed 'Good Advice' (K. Rangachari; THE STATESMAN, 14 Aug 81).....	3
Writer Compares Visits of Kirkpatrick, Gheysson (Inder Malhotra; THE TIMES OF INDIA, 27 Aug 81).....	5
Commentator Views Relations With U.S., USSR (A. S. Abraham; THE TIMES OF INDIA, 14 Aug 81).....	7
Visiting Soviet Vice President Talks to Press (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 25 Aug 81).....	9
Gandhi Dissolves West Bengal Congress Committee (THE STATESMAN, 27 Aug 81).....	10
Bengal Governor Resigns; Gandhi, Basu Meet (THE STATESMAN, 26 Aug 81).....	12
CPI Unhappy Over CPI-M Ideological Document (THE STATESMAN, 27 Aug 81).....	13
Sharad Pawar Provisional Congress-U President (THE STATESMAN, 26 Aug 81).....	14
Sharad Pawar Tells Newsmen Party Objectives (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 27 Aug 81).....	15
Congress-I Tells Congress-U To Hand Over Properties (THE STATESMAN, 27 Aug 81).....	18

Bengal Congress-I Changes To End Groupism (THE STATESMAN, 28 Aug 81).....	20
Congress-I Said To Encourage Punjab Separatists (PATRIOT, 26 Aug 81).....	21
Agitation Damage to Assam's Economy Cited (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 25 Aug 81).....	22
Tamil Nadu Issues White Paper on Food Situation (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 25 Aug 81).....	24
Dominant Akali Faction Suspends General Secretary (THE STATESMAN, 25 Aug 81).....	26
Delhi Concerned Over Attacks on Sri Lanka Tamils (THE HINDU, 15 Aug 81).....	28
Hard-Core Mizos Seen To Intensify Insurgency (Kirit Bhaumik; THE TIMES OF INDIA, 13, 14 Aug 81).....	29
CITU General Council Calls for Trade Union Unity (THE STATESMAN, 25 Aug 81).....	31
Laldenga Optimistic on Mizo Settlement (PATRIOT, 27 Aug 81).....	32
Press Council Asks Powers Against Erring Dailies (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 26 Aug 81).....	33
Northeastern Council Reportedly Under Strain (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 26 Aug 81).....	34
Nair Causes Second Split in Kerala RSP (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 27 Aug 81).....	36
Election Reform Proposals Under Consideration (THE HINDU, 25 Aug 81).....	37
Midterm Elections Possible in Three States (THE HINDU, 26 Aug 81).....	38
Short-Term Appointments Threaten Court's Independence (THE HINDU, 14 Aug 81).....	39
Government To Campaign Against Hoarding (G. K. Reddy; THE HINDU, 26 Aug 81).....	40
Purchase Funds Secured for Buying Mirage 2000 (B. K. Joshi; THE TIMES OF INDIA, 27 Aug 81).....	41

Rajya Sabha Discusses Foreign Training of Guerrillas (THE STATESMAN, 28 Aug 81).....	42
Team To Assess War Damage in Kampuchea (THE HINDU, 27 Aug 81).....	44
Role of CSIR in Scientific Development Reviewed (A. M. Zutshi; PATRIOT, 26 Aug 81).....	45
Richer Plant Nutrient Tests Prove Successful (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 14 Aug 81).....	55
National Fertilizers Head Reviews Plans, Progress (THE STATESMAN, 25 Aug 81).....	56
Autumn Wheat Production Less Than Expected (PATRIOT, 24 Aug 81).....	57
Association Reports on Trends in Power Industry (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 26 Aug 81).....	58
Four States Negotiate Water-Sharing Agreement (PATRIOT, 26 Aug 81).....	59
No Agreement on Water Transport With Dacca (THE STATESMAN, 26 Aug 81).....	61
Oil Minister Describes Response From Foreign Firms (PATRIOT, 26 Aug 81).....	62
Petroleum Minister Speaks at ONGC Celebration (PATRIOT, 24 Aug 81).....	63
ONGC Concerned Over Possible Customs Charges (S. T. Almeida; THE TIMES OF INDIA, 27 Aug 81).....	64
ONGC Officials Tell Plans for Nagaland, Assam (THE STATESMAN, 27 Aug 81).....	66
ONGC Tackles Problem of Restoring Oil Wells (C. V. Gopalakrishnan; THE HINDU, 26 Aug 81).....	67
Plans To Swap Bombay High Crude for Mideast Oil Told (G. K. Pandey; THE TIMES OF INDIA, 14 Aug 81).....	70
Sethi Answers Questions on Petroleum Revenues (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 25 Aug 81).....	71
Assam Oil Production Lowered by Agitation (PATRIOT, 27 Aug 81).....	72

Steel Minister Says Era of Shortages Over (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 25 Aug 81).....	73
Reporter Visits Demonstration Sponge Iron Plant (S. Parthasarathy; THE HINDU, 26 Aug 81).....	75
Minister Interviewed on Problems of Railways (Kedar Pande Interview; THE HINDU, 14 Aug 81).....	76
Briefs	
Alloy Project Costs	77
Assistant Navy Chief	77
Sindhi Problems Studied	77
Bihar Cabinet Reshuffle	77
Central Rule for Assam	78
Ambassador to Egypt	78
Ambassador to Sweden	78
Petroleum Ministry Panel	78
Jaguar in 1983	79
Edible Oil Duty	79
Janata Parliamentary Chief	79
Export-Import Bank	79
Assam Refugee Statistics	79
Air Squadron Commanders	80
New Grain Variety	80

BENGAL MINISTER CALLS FOR DISCUSSION OF IMF TERMS

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 28 Aug 81 p 5

[Text] New Delhi, August 27. The West Bengal finance minister, Dr Ashok Mitra, today called upon the Union government to make public the terms and conditions of the Rs. 5,000-crore loan being taken from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Addressing a press conference, Dr Mitra said Britain and Italy had thoroughly discussed the terms of loans in their respective parliaments before taking the huge loan.

Why was then the Union government shy of taking the people and parliament into confidence? Or was it that the IMF had asked the government of India not to take the public into confidence, he sarcastically asked.

The West Bengal finance minister asserted that the IMF loan, which would not be without preconditions, would be detrimental to the country's interest. He believed that the IMF would impose such conditions as withdrawal of subsidies and devaluation of currency, which were not in the country's interest.

He said there was no need for such loans. Additional resources could be generated through internal discipline.

Oil Price Hike

Dr Mitra told newsmen that the Centre was depriving the state governments of their legitimate share of revenues by increasing the prices of petroleum products through an administrative order.

In case the prices were raised by jacking up excise duties, the states would be entitled to 40 per cent share from the divisible pool. But in the present case, while the Centre took the entire amount, the state governments were to bear only the inflationary pressures, which upset their budgetary resources.

Dr Mitra alleged that the Centre was cajoling, threatening and bullying state governments to withdraw certain levies with a view to helping the rich.

He said that the Centre was also trying to encroach on the public sphere. In this connection, he mentioned that 22 bills passed by the state legislature were held up or refused assent by the President.

The state government had passed a bill, for instance, for removal of stray cattle from Calcutta, but the Centre had refused to give its assent on the plea that this "impinges on the freedom of trade."

Dr Mitra claimed that West Bengal was making an all-out attempt to implement land reforms. Out of the 2.1 million hectares of land redistributed in the entire country, West Bengal accounted for 1.1 million hectares.

The minister, however, conceded that some practical difficulties were being faced, which the state government was trying to overcome.

Asked whether the state government would impound dearness allowance of workers in case the Centre asked for it, Dr Mitra replied that the West Bengal government would not do anything which would go against the interest of the working class.

CSO: 4220/7647

EXPECTED TERMS FOR IMF LOAN DEEMED 'GOOD ADVICE'

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 14 Aug 81 p 8

[Commentary by K. Rangachari]

[Text]

INDIA'S negotiations with the International Monetary Fund for credit of SDR 5,000 million have evoked few cheers, while there is plenty of expressions of disapproval and of fears of unpleasant if not harsh terms being imposed as part of the Fund's "conditionality" practices. Contrast this with the reactions to the annual commitments of the Aid-India Consortium, which in the last two sessions alone amounted to an equally large sum of \$4,800 million, and the criticism, if any, was that this year's total should have been higher still to maintain the levels of aid in real terms. The World Bank monitors use of this aid (in addition to what the donors may do in respect of bilateral aid) and its annual reports to the Consortium have had many things to say on the performance of the Indian economy both agreeable and disagreeable, though the latter is usually clothed in diplomatic language. Except once when the former President George Woods was somewhat abrasive in his comments the World Bank's attitudes have earned understanding and even appreciation while the IMF is remembered for the unhappy rupee devaluation of 1966 which brought serious problems of adjustment rather than for the many successful initiatives it has taken since then to steer the world monetary system through the gold crisis and the breakdown of the par value system.

NEW FACILITY

In fairness to the Fund, it must be remembered that not all its lending facilities are subject to onerous "conditionality" clauses. The credits which India obtained last year from the Trust Fund and the compensatory Financing Facility carry concessional terms and no specific obligations were imposed on the directions of our economic policy. The IMF has now created a new facility for cereal imports by low-income member countries when they are affected by crop failure or an increase in world food prices: it has established a subsidy account to reduce the cost of borrowing for low-income countries under the supplementary financing facility. The Fund is not, therefore, a stern and uncompromising money lender that it is made out to be by the severe critics of its "conditionality" in the Third World.

Quite recently at Libreville (Gabon), the Fund's policies came up for a general reappraisal in the various committees connected with its operations in all of which the reduction of inflation and inflationary expectations was considered the primary objective to be pursued. The Interim Committee of 22 (representing all 41 members on the Executive Board) laid strong emphasis on "effective adjustment policies" by members seeking the enlarged access to the Fund's resources. In particular, members "making strong efforts

to correct their balance of payments problems" can draw up to 450 per cent of their increased quotas over a three-year period (excluding amounts obtained under the concessional "low conditionality" facilities). The idea is to underline the basic character of the Fund as a monetary institution, which is not engaged in development assistance like the World Bank but the promotion of payments' adjustments by members on appropriate terms so that the liquidity of the Fund is maintained at a time when claims on it are increasing because of rising oil prices. Even the group of 21 (representing the Third World) did not disapprove "conditionality" but only suggested that the adjustment programmes for the enlarged access to the Fund should be spread over longer periods with a proper balance between demand management and supply-oriented policies.

The question before the Indian authorities and the public is not whether adjustment programmes are an undesirable imposition, but first, whether India is left without any alternatives to the proposed application for over \$4,000 million under the enlarged access facility subject to such "strong adjustments" and, secondly, whether these adjustments would be appropriate and avoid imposing a severe strain on the Indian economy or refrain from interfering too much with our domestic policies which have popular sanction.

There can be two opinions on the first aspect. It is possible to hold that recent import policies have been too liberal in the context of the rising costs of oil and that with proper management of domestic supplies of foodgrains, sugar, edible oils, steel, cement and a number of other manufactured goods, annual foreign exchange savings are possible to the order of Rs 1,000 crores equal to the proposed borrowing. It is also arguable that in any case, the present approach to the Fund is premature while our foreign exchange reserves are still at Rs 4,200 crores, and a slightly larger amount of unused foreign aid is available in the pipeline.

The official answer to this is that borrowing while India's credit-rating is good can set us better terms than when the reserves decline. Another aspect is that the Fund will soon be running out of resources based on subscriptions under members' quotas, and may soon have to resort to medium-term borrowing from official and private sources to supplement them in which case the interest charges may go up nearly to double the levels now expected. The arguments on both sides, namely for avoiding recourse to the Fund at this stage and for tying up its assistance to feel secure on the payment front in the next few years, may be evenly balanced and the choice may depend largely on personal predilections.

DEVALUATION

Observers who are not particularly sympathetic to the Government's current economic policies can properly urge that an administration which can bend sufficiently to seek the cooperation and support of all sections of the public by being less partisan in its actions, may be able to dispense with the access to the Fund's enlarged facility. However, now that this statesmanlike approach has to be ruled out the issue to be faced is whether the IMF's "strong adjustment policies" will constitute an unwarranted interference in our national planning and prove inconsistent with our objectives.

At the moment there is only speculation over what these suggestions could be. A recommendation for devaluation of the

rupee is considered probable, more on the basis of what happened in 1986 than its relevance to the present situation in which the trade-weighted exchange value of the floating rupee is adjusted frequently with reference to a basket of currencies. The rupee has been appreciating against the pound sterling and depreciating in relation to the dollar. The present basket is by no means the most ideal one nor the Reserve Bank infallible in its present manipulations. Any improvement can be considered, but it is difficult to imagine that experts on the Fund believe that the cost of our products is so out of line with those of our competitors in markets abroad that our exports can benefit by a lower value of the rupee or that our imports should be made more costly than they already are owing to OPEC oil prices, foreign inflation and our own high import duties. Like most other countries, India is more a victim of external factors on both sides of its foreign trade account. No radical exchange rate adjustment can bring her payments into balance and it would be astonishing indeed if such a proposal were to be ever made.

The most specific elements of any proposed adjustment programme could be restraint on expansion of nominal demand, and fixation of quantitative targets for the growth of money supply. Many would wish that the fiscal discipline required to control public expenditure, avoid heavy budget deficits and keep down money supply expansion had come from within the Government instead of as a result of suggestion from foreign creditors. The Union Finance Minister has been trying to meet the Fund half-way by his "realistic" pricing of energy, both to raise resources and to cut consumption (if this is possible in a situation in which energy consumption is very low), by his ineffective assault on black money, and by compelling income-tax payers to save more.

FOOD SUBSIDIES

The standard prescription for reduction of subsidies is not easy to accept. Food subsidies are needed to hold down the cost of

living and prevent social unrest; export subsidies may be unorthodox but not quite inconsistent with the Fund's own objective of export promotion. Fertilizer subsidies, to the extent not already reduced, are quite consistent with the recommended policy of supply management to produce sufficient food and raw materials to avoid or replace imports. It is difficult to see how the Government can go further towards meeting the Fund's wishes in respect of the major subsidies without compromising its own stand on holding the price line. Nor does it seem sensible for anyone to recommend incomes restraint when the inflationary push comes from rising costs of oil products and repeated hikes in other administered prices with the role of wages being neutral if not negative.

It is universally accepted that the performance of public sector enterprises in particular of those related to the infrastructure, is far from being satisfactory even after the several steps taken in recent months. There is no need to resist further advice on this subject merely because it is offered by those who are providing substantial aid; improving the infrastructure is already part of our domestic stabilization policy. So will be advice on promoting larger private investments in various sectors of the economy; this may go against Leftist rhetoric but is now recognized to be both expedient for quick growth and necessary in the context of the continuing failure of the public sector to make most investments yield fair returns.

In many of these matters, wise and proper management of the economy required a certain degree of discipline and the political will to impose it wherever needed. If we are now in a situation in which the advice for adjustment policies has to be accepted from outside, the reason lies in the initial failure to impose it on our own initiative. The advice itself is not improper or less relevant on that account. It is still not too late to pause and consider whether stabilization of the economy is not possible by avoiding aid with strings in case unacceptable "conditionalities" is enough to be imposed.

WRITER COMPARES VISITS OF KIRKPATRICK, CHEYSSON

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 27 Aug 81 p 5

(Commentary by Inder Malhotra: "Two Visiting Dignitaries (Story in Contrast)"
[Text])

IT was entirely by accident and not at all by design that the visits to this country of the French foreign minister, Mr. Claude Cheysson, and U.S. permanent representative to the U.N., Mrs. Jeane Kirkpatrick, coincided. But this has inevitably underscored the sharp contrast not only between the styles of the two visiting dignitaries but also between the end results of their missions.

Mr. Cheysson who has already been nicknamed in some international circles as "French Krishna Menon minus the latter's vituperation," impressed everybody by his ability, drive, quick grasp and fluent delivery. He went about his task with great energy and was remarkably forthright in both public and private. He was not exaggerating one bit when he announced that his visit had opened a "new chapter" in Indo-French relations during which the across-the-board cooperation between the two countries would be carried much beyond the fairly high level it had reached during the regime of President Giscard d'Estaing.

This may seem as natural as it is welcome. But it is only pertinent to point out that in quickly deciding to both widen and deepen the Indo-French relationship, the socialist government of France headed by President Mitterrand has had to overcome some of its previous notions about this country. For instance, Mr. Mitterrand's party, like social democrats in the rest of West Europe, had traditionally felt an affinity for the Indian socialist currently led by Mr. George Fernandes. It was therefore somewhat upset about what happened to him during the

emergency. But once in power the French socialists were quick to come to grips with life's realities. They realised that nothing like a socialist party was left in India and that the social and economic policies of Mrs. Gandhi's government were no different from what French socialists would want followed in the third world.

CORDIAL

Mrs. Kirkpatrick, on the other hand, spoke and acted like a professor which is what she was until she joined politics. Though her discussions with Mrs. Gandhi and Mr. Narasimha Rao were extremely cordial, there was unfortunately no meeting of minds between the two sides. Indeed, the gap between the Indian and U.S. perceptions, as spelt out during these discussions, remained as wide as before, especially over the critical issue of the security problems being created in the region by the U.S. decision to arm Pakistan with F-16 warplanes, M-60 tanks and other sophisticated weapons. Her speech on the subject at the India International Centre did not improve matters.

Even so, it would be wrong to write off Mrs. Kirkpatrick's visit as a wash-out. She is the highest ranking member of the Reagan administration—she has a cabinet rank and seat on the U.S. national security council—to have visited India. She enjoys President Reagan's confidence and is perhaps the only academic with detailed knowledge of international affairs in an administration dominated by California wheeler-dealers.

During her stay here she may

have found it necessary or expedient to stick to the briefings which she came. But it will surely be an advantage if the Indian point of view outlined at the highest level—when President Reagan, though also rather than only through the traditional channels of the state department, now contradicted by the super-pundit Mrs. Haig.

For this reason, it was sensible of South Block to have arranged even at the last of briefing security regulations to take Mrs. Kirkpatrick to the operations room at the army headquarters to give her the fullest information on Indian and Pakistani developments, actual and potential. Unless she had chosen to close her mind, she must have given her answers to some of the questions she has been raising such as how could the introduction of F-16s—Pakistan pose a threat to the fourth largest military power?

Besides being given precise information on military matters, Mrs. Kirkpatrick was also told that India could take care of Pakistani threat under any circumstances but the U.S. ought not to be oblivious of the impact of its actions on the security ramifications in the sub-continent or on India's defence spending. Moreover, India's historical experience concerning U.S. military aid and support to Pakistan could not be wasted either.

APPRECIATED

For instance, Mrs. Kirkpatrick was at pains to stress that the U.S. greatly appreciated the strength of India's democratic institutions.

falling and expected there to be a factor not only for mutual stability but also for stability in the region as a whole. She recounted the information that the U.S. regarded China under Mr. Deng Xiaoping to be a pacific country and that Washington would use all its influence in Beijing to hasten the normalisation of India-China relations.

And she appeared to show some understanding for the Indian fear that reports of rebel activity in Afghanistan were greatly exaggerated and that whatever else might be said about Kampuchea, Pol Pot could not surely be accepted as the legitimate ruler of that Godless country.

The most useful part of the visit with Mrs. Kapuralski, however, was that both sides recognised the urgent need now to allow their differences to lead to a deterioration in their relationship. This under the circumstances is not too discouraging a backdrop for the impending meeting between Mrs. Gandhi and President Reagan at Cancun during the north-south summit. And that brings one back to the much more fruitful talks here with the French foreign minister. For, as Mr. Chevaison repeated, underlined, President Mitterrand's government is committed to a new international economic order, to be created through cooperation between the rich north and poor south.

Mr. Mitterrand's efforts at Ottawa to persuade President Reagan to think more about north-south cooperation than about entente cordiale this fall will pay off if Mr. Chevaison's talks in New Delhi to coordinate to the maximum extent possible the French strategy

at Cancun with that of India and other third world countries.

On Afghanistan and Kampuchea, Mr. Chevaison was frank in explaining his country's inability to stray too far from the policies jointly evolved by the European Economic Community and the NATO alliance. But he was no less blunt in dissociating himself and France from the sterile posture of some who refuse to have ANY truck with the Banrai Karma regime in Kabul or the Heng Samrin government in Phnom Penh. France, he said, would back any initiative India or anyone else could take to break the logjam in Asia's two crisis spots.

BIG SCOPE

About political, economic, scientific, technological and other forms of cooperation the scope is immense and the two countries can proceed as fast and as far as they want to or can. Having embarked on a massive plasma project, the French are both willing and ready to help in a wide range of economic activities from soil conservation to steel, electronics to experimentation in solar energy and oil extraction to development of deserts-prone areas in Rajasthan or Punjab. Work on all these areas is expected to begin immediately so that necessary contracts may be signed in mid-November when Mrs. Gandhi visits Paris.

Perhaps inevitably, the greatest public attention has centred on Mr. Chevaison's announcement of a military delegation — to be headed by the new defence secretary, Mr. P. K. Nayak — will go to Paris soon to have a look at

the Mirage-2000 and to explore other areas of defence production in which the two countries can cooperate as they already do in the production of Alouette helicopters and a fairly wide range of missiles. It is also no secret that Soviet-designed MiG-21s produced under licence in this country have been improved with the help of French technology in electronics and materials with Soviet consent.

India is also having to buy from France 120 Milan anti-aircraft missiles because the Americans are placing impossible conditions on the sale of this country of TOW anti-tank missiles with which Pakistan is bush.

All this does not mean that New Delhi is about to embark on an arms purchase agreed in Paris. On the contrary, US manufacturers have been told the need to acquire the Mirage 2000 at as early because of US insistence on supplying the F-16 to Pakistan and this aircraft is the second-best, the most lethal multi-role combat aircraft in existence. In other words, it is still easier for the Americans to bait the Indians than to be drawn in themselves in India in the heat of mutual economic difficulties.

Another important point about Indo-French cooperation in the field of defence production needs to be made. What is being envisaged is not a bilateral or even friendship but a partnership under which the two countries would jointly participate in not only participation but also R and D. Not all this activity will take place in France. Whatever can be produced at developed more economically in this country would be transferred to Indian soil.

CSU: 4227/7640

COMMENTATOR VIEWS RELATIONS WITH U.S., USSR

BENGALURU: THE TIMES OF INDIA (in English) 14 Aug 81 p 3

[Commentary by A. S. Narasimha: "Foreign Policy Options: Miforming India's strategic cloud"]

[Text]

THE tenth anniversary of the Indo-Soviet friendship treaty is a good occasion to reflect on where our foreign policy is going, where it should be going and what the options are. In the first place, it is clear that we have never had as little leverage with the United States as we do today. Under both Republican and Democratic administrations in the past, Indo-American agreements — and the relationship between the two countries has been marked by differences rather than by agreement — have required the mutual, implicit understanding that what they felt about each other and the world seemed to both.

Under President Reagan, however, it is a picture has in effect taken place. India is utterly peripheral to American concerns, as the present U.S. administration sees them; both China and Pakistan are much more central to them in this part of the world. One has only to compare Mr. Carter's careful handling of the Tarapur case to Mr. Reagan's much more laissez faire approach to it to realise what this change of perception in America's view of India's strategic relevance to it can mean in practical terms. Mr. Reagan has all but said that he does not care to maintain as much as a modest level of Indo-U.S. strategic interaction. As he views it, since the two countries start from quite different premises, such interaction would be essentially negative. So why bother?

BRIGHT SPOT

It is small consolation to India that it is not being singled out for such treatment. Whichever country is not prepared to play ball, Reagan-style, is being similarly

cold-shouldered. Most of the third world, for that matter, is sought to be given short shrift, as America's emerging stand on a range of North-South issues (which it prefers to see in East-West terms) is making clear. On aid, trade, foreign private investment, the Law of the Sea, human rights, arms exports, the WHO baby food code, the U.S. has as good as told the third world: we intend to do our own thing, so either lump it or go your own way.

While America, for obvious reasons, can afford to put India in the doghouse, India cannot afford and should not try to perpetuate an Indo-American estrangement. We need American markets and technology rather than the other way round. American goodwill is essential to getting aid whether from multilateral institutions like the World Bank and the IMF (in whose operations the U.S. has a big say) or from commercial lenders. At the same time India cannot, in the effort to acquire the financial wherewithal of development, align itself with the American view of the world, especially since that view appears to be in direct conflict with Indian regional interests. Between these two poles, Indian policy has to find a balance. Until now, given American acknowledgement that this country is more than passing concern to the U.S., it has been possible, by and large, to strike such a balance — and to some Indian advantage. But with the Reagan administration deliberately downgrading India to a kind of irrelevance (from its standpoint) is a whole new ball-game as the Americans would say.

One bright spot for India is that its views on a number of foreign policy issues are currently being

and more seriously listened to by European leaders. This is probably so after Mr. Mitterrand's election as president of France. In fact, American and European leaders can see North-South issues as the key to East-West peace. At the recent Ottawa summit of the heads of the major industrialised countries, they were able to judge Mr. Reagan's just that much less ignorant than his predecessor, Mr. Ford. The former, in his capacity as chairman of the Non-Signatory group, was more sympathetic.

Nor are west European-American differences confined to North-South issues. Issues like the Central American PCC, the Soviet-Afghan war, and the Iran-Iraq war, though far from being the main focus of attention, show more differences and pretty near to the maximum as well. European positions are more definite on arms spending, more positive on the role of the clear masses in Europe, more critical on America's foreign policy and stockpiles. They also favour enhanced radiation control. These are known as the positions which are also very different from those of the Americans and other members of the non-aligned states, particularly

Following from this, there is in the world a marked trend towards closer links with the European community and away from a policy of alignment with the U.S. This is reflected in the growing popularity of the EEC, in the growing importance of the European Economic Community as a guarantee of economic stability in the U.S. and in the growing popularity of the EEC among the European publics.

the standing Indian mission to
NATO). The US is going to do
what measures it's West European partners
Since India does not fit the other
of the world-view of the European
partners, it cannot hope to accom-
plish too much in the direction of
making common cause with the
Europeans. But some possibility
of doing so and thereby of counter-
acting America's curse is definitely
in India's interest if the situation exists.

CONDUIT

Meanwhile developments affecting
the Indo-Soviet channel are also
taking place. The Soviet Foreign
Minister M. Gromyko's visit to Islamabad will
begin August 24. In his capacity as the New Republic's
Asia Correspondent of Watergate fame, M. Carl Bernstein has
established that Pakistan is already
serving as a conduit for the passage
of more modern arms to the Afghan
rebels. Pakistan, for its part,
is insisting that its three-billion-dollar
economic and arms deal with the U.S. does not entail any
political quid pro quo and Pakistan
is as non-aligned as ever. As far
as the Russian threat to its survival
the sensible reaction of the
U.S.-Pakistan deal following the
Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.
Pakistan denies no less fervently
that any such threat exists and
that the arms agreement with the
U.S. is merely to "modernise" its
forces.

Baluch leaders in exile in Europe
have decided — apparently with
the Soviet approval — to set up a
base in Kabul to direct their resistance
movement. For a separate
section of their own camp, and
what is now Pakistan's Baluchistan

police. As Afghan refugees pour
into Pakistan (there are some 140
million of them now), Islamabad
will bear the destabilising effects
of such an influx whether in terms
of a Soviet response if the refugee
camps become insurgent recruitment
and supply bases or by way
of a growing the Pashtoon movement
inside Pakistan.

Obviously, the Russians are in
a position to put the squeeze on
Pakistan should they feel that it
is going too far in aiding and
arresting the American-backed
insurgency in Afghanistan. So there
may be some substance in Pakistani
assertions that they have not sold out to the Americans. At the
same time the Pakistanis are not
averse to warming up to the Americans
if this means as it already
does being able to beef up its
own army to be deployed perhaps
in another war with India or
against secessionist forces like the
Baluchis threatening to tear Paki-
stan apart or even against the
Russians should the latter come to
feel that Pakistan has overstepped
the mark in playing along with the
Americans and so needs to be
punished.

WRITHING

India has no reason to feel per-
turbed over a Soviet-Pakistan dialogue.
Pakistan has tied itself up
in knots over the Afghanistan issue
and is now writhing this way and
that seeking to mend fences with the
Russians while continuing to
eliminate the Americans in order
to unloosen itself. But Pakistan's
evident and growing discomfiture
does not make the Soviet presence
in Afghanistan of which to which
there is as yet no sign any the less
disconcerting for India. India may

not have proclaimed its distress at
the Soviet intervention from the
households but it has made that
distress plain in more direct
ways a degree of subtlety that the
Europeans, though not most of
the west Europeans, have been
able to appreciate. So long as India
maintains its stance so long as it
remains unhappy over the Soviet
action but refuses to express this
in such abrasive ways as to
diminish the leverage it presents
relationship with the Russians plus
it over them a leverage which a
serious attempt at finding a solution
must seek to harness. And if
Cagayan the moving and behind
the failed LDC initiative sought
to do, and then India
cannot justly be accused of having
abstained as non-aligner because
of an excessive dependence on the
Russians.

What India can do is emphasise
that on Afghanistan it is detrac-
ting itself from the Russians without
trying to put them in the dock — the
western strategy has sought to
do this and been counter-productive — is to repair its relations
with China as soon as possible.
Both sides are now more than ready
and willing to do this. The desks
have already been cleared. A normal
friendly relationship with
China would, among other things,
achieve two objectives. It would
demonstrate that the 1971 Indo-
Soviet treaty is not a straitjacket
that continuing friendship with the
Russians is not incompatible with
amicable ties with other countries
even those opposed to the Soviets.
And it would signal to the Americans
that India has a strategic role
of some significance and that in the
way they seem to be going.

CSO: 4229/7622

INDIA

VISITING SOVIET VICE PRESIDENT TALKS TO PRESS

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 25 Aug 81 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, August 24 (UNI)--The massive arming of Pakistan and establishment of military bases in the Indian Ocean by the United States is part of a "conspiracy" to force India to give up its policy of non-alignment, the Soviet vice-president, Mr E. Yazkuliev, said today.

Addressing a press conference, Mr Yazkuliev rejected the contention that Pakistan was acquiring arms to meet the Soviet threat. The Soviet Union had never threatened Pakistan nor had it any design on that country, he said.

The Soviet Union shared the concern of the people of India at the rearming of Pakistan, he said, adding that Afghanistan was being used as an excuse to encircle India, one of the leading member of the non-aligned movement.

Referring to President Reagan's decision to go in for the manufacture of neutron bomb, he quoted an oriental saying: "If God wants to destroy a man, he deprives him of his brain."

Commenting on the shooting down of two Libyan planes by the U.S., Mr Yazkuliev said the Soviet Union condemned "this act of international terrorism by the country the name of which is known to you."

He paid rich tribute to Mrs Gandhi and described her as a "very courageous political leader of the non-aligned movement" and great friend of the Soviet Union. He said the delegation had "very fruitful" talks with her.

He said the main purpose of his visit was to strengthen the existing cultural and economic ties between the two countries.

The friendship between the first socialist country of the world and the leading country of the non-aligned movement had led to peace and stability to the world, he said.

He adds: Mr Yazkuliev said a long-term cultural agreement was signed between the friends of the Soviet Union under which certain documents were signed. Further friendship would be developed was outlined. Birthdays of leaders of India and the Soviet Union would be celebrated. Exchange of eminent figures in the cultural field, politicians and journalists would form a part of the agreement, he said.

INDIA

GANDHI DISSOLVES WEST BENGAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 27 Aug 81 p 1

[Text] Mrs Gandhi on Wednesday dissolved the West Bengal Pradesh Congress(I) Committee and set up an ad hoc panel of 29 members in its place. Mr Anandagopal Mukherjee, M.P., is the president of the committee which has four vice-presidents, Mr Abdus Sattar, Mr Apurba Lal Mazumdar, Mr Santimohan Roy and Mr Nitaipada Ghosh. Mr Gopal Das Nag is the general secretary and Mr Rajesh Khaitan treasurer.

The measure announced in New Delhi is to end factionalism within the State Congress and revitalize the party and enable it to face the challenge of the CPI(M).

Though some of the State party leaders welcomed the measure which, they hoped, would revitalize the party the decision surprised a sizeable section of West Bengal Congress(I) members. They wondered why some of those prominent members who had stood by the leadership during the difficult days of the Janata rule had been excluded from the ad hoc committee and why some members who had joined the Congress(I) only a few months ago had been included in it.

Mr Ajit Panja, former president of the WBPCC(I), asked to comment on the organizational developments, remarked: "I believe in party discipline. So, I accept the decision of my party leader. Whatever she does, she does for our good."

Mr Bholanath Sen, leader of the Congress(I) Legislature Party, welcoming the charge hoped that under the new leadership a stronger and disciplined party would emerge. Mr Sattar, MLA and former Minister, said the new committee would help resolve differences within the party.

According to information reaching Calcutta, the new committee members include Mr Panja, Mr Bholanath Sen, Mr A.B.A. Ghani Khan Chowdhury, Mr Pranab Mukherjee, Mr D. P. Chatterjee, Mr A. K. Sen, Mr Subrata Mukherjee, Mr Gholan Yazdani, Mr Gobinda Naskar, Mr Sitaram Mahato, Mr Abdur Rouf Ansari, Mr Krishnadas Roy, Mr Nityananda Dey, Mr Santosh Roy, Mr Jayanta Bhattacharya, Miss Tushar Tudu, Mrs Manjula Roy and Mr Lalbahadur Singh.

Our Special Representative in New Delhi adds: In the much awaited reorganization of the State unit, Mrs Gandhi included almost all important groups to give it a broader base. In the executive are Mr Fazle Haq, Mr Dawa Narbola of Darjeeling, Mr Somen Mitra and Mr Ananda Mohan Biswas.

Mr Anandagopal Mukherjee said his first task would be to revitalize the organization at the block, subdivisional and district levels and also all the front organizations. He said the Chhatra Parishad, Youth Congress, teachers, women and trade union wings of the party were all represented in the executive by their leaders.

The idea was that the organization would be developed in the district, block and subdivisional level so that the party and the front units moved together.

The revitalized party would be given a "development orientation" because it was B. C. Roy's birth centenary year.

More steps are expected to be taken to tone up the State party organization to enable it to face the CPI(M)'s challenge in next year's Assembly elections, adds PTI.

CSO: 4220/7643

INDIA

BENGAL GOVERNOR RESIGNS; GANDHI, BASU MEET

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 26 Aug 81 p 1

[Text] Mr Myoti Basu, who met the Governor of West Bengal, Mr T. N. Singh, in Calcutta on Tuesday morning later told reporters that Mr Singh had already sent his resignation to Delhi. During his 45-minute meeting with Mr Basu, Mr Singh deplored that the Centre had to convey its intention to him through an "emissary" when it could have informed him through the usual channel, Mr Basu said. "After all, the Central Government has appointed me," the Governor commented.

Mr Basu could not say when the new Governor would be appointed but added that the Centre was waiting for his return from Europe. The custom was that the Chief Minister should be informed before the appointment of a new Governor.

Mrs Gandhi, however, told Mr Basu during their meeting in New Delhi on Monday that the question of dismissal of the Left Front Government was "absurd." Mr Basu had told Mrs Gandhi that the sudden decision to change the Governor of West Bengal had created an impression that the Front Government would be dislodged soon.

Among the other issues that figured in the meeting between Mrs Gandhi and Mr Basu was the Assam problem. Mr Basu said it was a national problem and the Front Government was willing to cooperate with the Centre. But, the Front was not sure as to what kind of help the Centre wanted. The Union Government was toying with a number of formulae. The stand of the CPI(M) on the question of supporting a Congress(I)-led Government in Assam was well known he added.

The Chief Minister who had been to London and Paris during his tour of Europe, said more than half a million Indians residing in Britain were really perturbed over the race relations there. Most of them were employed in that country, and it was difficult for them to leave it. The unemployment problem, he believed, was behind the race riots.

Mr Basu said there had been instances when white and black youths had together attacked the police. This, he suggested was an expression of protest against the policies of the Conservative Government. He had requested the leaders of the Indian Workers Organization in London to send a detailed report on the situation in Britain, particularly the implications of the Nationality Bill.

In Paris, Mr Basu had talks with leaders of the French Communist Party but did not meet any socialist leader there.

INDIA

CPI UNHAPPY OVER CPI-M IDEOLOGICAL DOCUMENT

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 27 Aug 81 p 3

[Text] The CPI(M) and the CPI have recently come closer through joint movements against the Central Government's policies. Representatives of the West Bengal unit of the CPI have been attending the Left Front meetings. But the ideological positions of the two parties remain as different as ever.

The State CPI is unhappy over the recent publication of an ideological document, "How the CPI(M) has gained strength by fighting its enemy" by Mr Partha Ghosh, stated to be the pen-name of a CPI(M) theoretician enjoying the confidence of the State party leadership. Such publications, a CPI leader says, only harm the cause of Left unity.

For the writer of this 160-page book, the CPI(M)'s enemy is neither imperialism nor monopoly capital nor Mrs Gandhi; it is the CPI encouraged by neo-revisionism of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The symptoms of revisionism detected in the CPI could be traced, according to the writer, in the mid-fifties, nearly a decade before the party split in 1964. The would-be "Right CPI" leaders chose the revisionist path of compromise while the would-be CPI(M) leaders adopted the correct revolutionary line, he claimed.

The last two chapters of the book deal with the Number 2 enemy of the CPI(M), the Naxalites whose formation of the Naxalbari Revolutionary Coordination Committee in 1967 has been described in the political circle as the logical continuation of the CPI(M)'s earlier political stand to eschew the parliamentary form of struggle.

CSO: 4220/7643

INDIA

SHARAD PAWAR PROVISIONAL CONGRESS-U PRESIDENT

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 26 Aug 81 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, Aug 25--The Congress(U) Working Committee today unanimously elected Mr Sharad Pawar, former Chief Minister of Maharashtra, provisional president of the party subject to ratification by the All-India Congress(U) Committee which would meet here on October 17 and 18.

The choice of Mr Pawar was almost a foregone conclusion since the party had found in him a young dynamic leader who had successfully organized the kisan agitation in Marathwada in October, 1980, and refused to toe the line of his mentor, Mr Y. B. Chavan, in walking over to Mrs Gandhi's camp recently.

The working committee while accepting unanimously the resignation of Mr Devaraj Urs placed on record its "deep sense of gratitude" for the services rendered by him since taking over the presidency on September 13, 1978.

In circles close to the Congress(U), neither the coming of Mr Sharad Pawar nor the exit of Mr Devaraj Urs had come as a surprise because of the open campaign against Mr Urs within the rank and file of the party. However, Mr Urs made it explicit in his letter when he said: "over the last few days, I have noted from a number of Press reports that there is a section in our party which believes that a change in leadership is necessary."

The working committee met for a total of 8-1/2 hours yesterday and today, but Mr Urs stayed away from the meeting in the afternoon when the election of the new president was held. A consensus on Mr Pawar, president of the Maharashtra Pradesh Congress committee(U) had already been reached during Monday night.

Referring to the de-recognition of the Congress(U) by the Election Commission, Mr K. P. Unnikrishnan, its general secretary, told reporters that although the working committee accepted the verdict of the Supreme Court, but "we have been denied a just, full and proper hearing on the issues involved." The working committee, he said, considered the judgment "an invitation and encouragement to the splitters of the political parties which endangers the political system."

The working committee requested its various Pradesh Congress Committees for an amendment to the name with an eye to seeking an election symbol, subject to the ratification by the AICC.

Mr Unnikrishnan said various names were suggested and some of them were: Indian National Congress (Socialist), Indian National Congress (Democratic), Indian National Socialist Congress and Indian National Democratic Congress.

He said that the Centre was also trying to encroach on the public sphere. In this connection, he mentioned that 22 bills passed by the state legislature were held up or refused assent by the President.

A general feeling within the 50-odd working committee members was to keep the identity of the organization in tact, under the banner of the tricolour "We cannot and shall not allow a feeling to grow that the Congress organization and its flag is the monopoly of an individual or a family."

Therefore, the committee decided to strengthen the organization at all levels and while the Congress(U) was pledged to retain its identity, it was aware of its role as a national Opposition party.

The Congress(U) Working Committee decided to work in close association with all other Opposition parties. There was, however, a sectional opinion within the executive, that it should forge closer links with Janata, the Lok Dal, Democratic Socialist Party and the Jawardhi Party.

The committee has appealed to all like-minded parties and groups to join hands in the pursuit of similar objectives.

It made it explicit that the Congress(U) was willing to work unitedly with all Opposition parties in the struggle on issues, such as civil liberties, autonomy of States and democratic framework, price rise, unemployment.

CSO: 4220/7635

INDIA

SHARAD PAWAR TELLS NEWSMEN PARTY OBJECTIVES

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 27 Aug 81 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, August 26. Mr Sharad Pawar, president of the Congress(S), ruled out "merger" with any other party and said a dialogue for cooperation with the CPI(M) leaders would begin shortly.

Addressing his maiden press conference after being unanimously elected as provisional president by the working committee yesterday, Mr Pawar said his party would adopt a uniform anti-Congress(I) policy.

His statement implies that in West Bengal, Mr Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi will have to stop seeking Congress(I) support to fight the Marxists. And in Andhra Pradesh, the party will stop cooperating with the BJP.

Clarifying his party's policy, Mr Pawar said while cooperation with the BJP would be confined to issues like civil liberties and threat to democratic and parliamentary institutions, his party had no objection to working in "close cooperation" with the Janata Party, Lok Dal, the two communist parties and other left-of-centre parties. He even envisaged "joint fronts" with the latter parties in some states.

As Gujarat has disbanded the party unit there and Mr Hitendra Desai has resigned. Mr Pawar is deputing Mr Ramnath Pande, Bombay unit president, and one general secretary to go there as observers and set up a new unit.

Mr Pawar is deputing Mrs Tarakeshwari Sinha and Mr S. W. Dhabe to visit Madhya Pradesh and set up a new unit there also.

Explaining the party's attitude towards the ruling party, Mr Pawar said it would be one of "constructive cooperation" on issues like "family planning, tree plantation and national security."

Asked whether he would appeal to those like Mr Y. B. Chavan who had left his party but not yet been admitted into the ruling party to return, Mr Pawar replied: "Why should we think about those who have left the party?"

He told newsmen in reply to questions that his party would launch agitations on rising prices, unemployment, curbs on the rights of the working class, farmers'

problems, the import policy and the conditions' imposed on IMF loans. Support from like-minded parties on these issues was welcome--indeed, their cooperation would be sought.

A notice has been issued to Mr D. B. Chandra Gouda, president of the Karnataka unit, seeking clarifications on his recent meeting with Mrs Indira Gandhi.

It was announced that the working committee would meet on October 15 and 16 immediately after which the AICC would be held on October 17 and 18. The venue of the session may be Bombay or Delhi, Mr Pawar said.

He also announced the new executive. The only addition to the four existing general secretaries is Mr Badabrat Barooah from Assam who also becomes a member of the working committee. While the eight elected members of the working committee continue, the new nominations are Mr Devaraj Urs, Mr A. K. Antony, Mr Raj Bahadur, Mr Yunus Saleem, Mr Mathura Das Mathur, Mrs Tarakeshwari Sinha, Mr Raj Mangal Pandey, and the five general secretaries.

CSO: 4220/7640

INDIA

Congress-I TELLS CONGRESS-U TO HAND OVER PROPERTIES

Calcutta THE STATEMAN in English 27 Aug 81 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, Aug 26--The AICC(I) headquarters here today "directed" the Congress(U) to hand over all the properties belonging to the Indian National Congress to it immediately, failing which "the property illegally occupied by such group will be captured by the members of the AICC(I)."

In a Press release the AICC(I)'s legal cell said today that the Chief Election Commissioner held in the symbol case that the Indian National Congress(I) was the real Congress. Subsequently the Supreme Court had rejected the claim of the Congress(U) and declared that the party headed by Mrs Gandhi was the only real Indian National Congress.

"Some individuals and groups are, however, misusing the name of the Indian National Congress and the identity of the INC is being illegally exploited by the Congress led by Mr Sharad Pawar, and the Congress(J). Addition of the word "socialist" or "democratic" to the Indian National Congress is in violation of the verdict given by the CEC and the Supreme Court.

"If the name of the Indian National Congress and its identity is misused by any individual or group, it will be liable to punishment under the law of the land," the Press release signed by the joint secretary of the legal cell, Mr P. S. Sharma, said.

It called upon the Chief Election Commissioner to look into the violation immediately, and "not to remain a silent spectator, but to take cognizance of such illegal activities by such individuals or groups."

Meanwhile, the newly elected interim president of the Congress(U), Mr Sharad Pawar said today that his immediate task would be to maintain an independent identity and to shun merger with any other party.

Addressing a Press conference, Mr Pawar said his primary task would be to create confidence among the rank and file in the party.

Mr Pawar announced the party's new working committee which made a minor change and named its former president, Mr Devaraj Urs, a nominated member and Mr Bedabrata Barua an additional general secretary.

dan socialist currently led by Mr. George Fernandes. It was therefore somewhat upset about what happened to him during the

knowledge of international affairs in an administration dominated by California wheeler-dealers.

During her stay here she may

find out how Mr. Kinnar was at pains to stress that the U.S. greatly appreciated the strength of India's democratic sys-

In view of the de-recognition of the party's name by the Election Commission, the interim president was asked how he would christen his party till the All India Congress Committee gave it a new name, Mr Pawar said it would be better if it was called as the Congress(S), the initial "S" obviously meaning himself.

He said the working committee would meet in Delhi on October 15 and 16, which would be followed by the AICC on October 17 and 18.

Following are the members elected to the working committee: Mr P. R. Das Munshi, Mr Bhola Paswan Shastri, Mr Sarat Chandra Sinha, Mr Tulsi Dasappa, Mr Vayalar Ravi and Mr Rajni Patel. The nominated members are: Mr Devaraj Urs, Mr A. K. Antony, Mr Raj Bahadur, Mr Yunus Saleem, Mr Mathura Das Mathur, Mrs Tarakeshwari Sinha, Mr Raj Mangal Pandey, Mr K. P. Unnikrishnan, Mrs Ambika Soni, Mr Banka Behary Das, Mr Jaya Narayan and Mr Belabhrata Barua. The last five are general secretaries.

The permanent invitees are: Mr Nathuram Mirdha, Mr D. K. Borooh, Mr Ram Lakhman Singh Yadav, Mrs Sumitra Kulkarni, Mrs Subhadra Joshi, Mr K. Gopal, Mr Brahm Parakash, Mr J. Vengal Rao, Mr J. S. Dara, Mr V. B. Raju, Mrs Purabi Mukherjee and Mr K. H. Srinivasa.

CSO: 4220/7643

INDIA

BENGAL CONGRESS-I CHANGES TO END GROUPISM

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 28 Aug 81 p 1

[Text] The selection of Mr Anandagopal Mukherjee, MP and Mr Gopal Das Nag as the president and general secretary of the West Bengal Congress(I) indicates that Mrs Gandhi has entrusted some elderly politicians with the State party leadership in the hope that they will be able to end the chronic group rivalry in the State unit.

Although it is too early to state how the party will shape under the new leadership, it has to be noted that some of the leaders who have been connected with the in-fighting or have lodged complaints against the State party leadership in Delhi have been left out. Neither Mr Mukherjee nor Mr Nag are likely to toe the lines of the two Central Ministers, Mr Pranab Mukherjee and Mr Ghani Khan Chowdhury who have been trying to dominate the State Congress(I) organization.

The party's youth and student wings who have been deeply embedded in group rivalries, are eagerly awaiting the proposed reorganization of the Yuba Congress(I) and the Chhatra Parishad (I). Three secretaries of the PCC(I) are also likely to be announced.

There is speculation in the party circle that a small steering committee will be announced later to conduct the next year's Assembly elections. Mr Siddhartha Ray may be connected with this committee.

On Thursday the State Congress(I) office in Victoria Terrace wore a deserted look. The newly appointed president and the general secretary were away in Delhi while members of the new executive committee were also absent. When contacted, the former State Congress(I) president, Mr Ajit Panja, said that he would go to the office to hand over charge to the new president when he returns from Delhi.

A spokesman of the Yuba Congress(I) said that the new State Committee would lay down the guideline on how best to oppose the proposed Bangla Bandh called by the Left parties. The YC would organize a convention in Behala on September 7 in support of the Essential Services Maintenance Ordinance.

CSO: 4220/7649

CONGRESS-I SAID TO ENCOURAGE PUNJAB SEPARATISTS

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 26 Aug 81 p 1

[Text] Chandigarh, Aug 25--Punjab Vidhan Sabha today saw the ruling Congress-I being charged with "patronising and financing the Khalistan" lobby and the Akalis being blamed for encouraging separatist tendencies through "the Sikhs are a separate nation" theory.

The counter allegations were traded by Chief Minister Darbara Singh and leader of the opposition Parkash Singh Badal during an otherwise insipid day-long debate on the motion of lack of confidence in the Cong-I Government.

The no-trust move had been jointly tabled by the Akali Dal (L) CPI and the CPM. The motion was declared lost by the Speaker with 63 members voting against it and 43 in favour of it.

The Akali Dal (T) and the BJP supported the motion, while, All India Communist Party (AICP) member Baldev Singh Loomba and Mr Sukhjinder Singh who was recently expelled from the Akali Dal(L) were not in the House when the voting took place.

Mr Budal refuting the allegation of the Cong-I said that Darbara Singh had been engineering conspiracies to divide Hindus and Sikhs to perpetuate the Cong-I rule. He said that his party was committed to the unity and integrity of the country. The Akalis and Sikhs had been in the forefront during the freedom struggle and later in defending the borders. He said that it is unpatriotic to blame his party of anti-national activities.

Replying to Mr Badal's speech, the Chief Minister said that the Sikhs are a separate nation theory was nothing but a step in the direction of separatism and cession. He said there were large number of religion based communities living in India but there nationality was one and the whole country was a single nation. Anybody and especially the Akalis who differed with this were doing nothing short of working against the unity and integrity of the country.

He said the fact that some Akalis took extremist stand and others took a sober line could just be the part of a strategy to achieve the final objective of separatism. In support of their motion CPI leader Raj Kumar and CPM member Sarwan Singh Cheema, however, attacked the Government for its gross failure virtually on all fronts such as political, economic, social and last but not the least administrative. Others who spoke on the motion included Cong-I president Sarla Prashar and ruling party member Bir Devinder Singh and BJP member Khushal Chand.

INDIA

AGITATION DAMAGE TO ASSAM'S ECONOMY CITED

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 25 Aug 81 p 13

[Text] New Delhi, August 24. The finance minister, Mr R. Venkataraman, today reiterated the government's determination to find a satisfactory solution to the foreigners problem in Assam, but said the prolonged agitation had done a lot of damage to the state's economy.

Winding up the debate on the Assam budget and the proclamation for imposition of President's rule in the state, the minister marshalled facts and figures to show that the charge of the state's neglect in economic development could not be sustained.

If Assam had suffered economically it was due to geography and history. The backwardness of the entire region was a legacy of the British rule. But since independence the state had been treated in a special category. The Gadgil formula for Central assistance had not been applied to the state. It had always received more.

Stating that the "myth of neglect" should be exploited, Mr Venkataraman pointed out that the economic condition of the people of Assam was comparatively better than many so-called advanced states. Regarding the per capita income, Assam's status (Rs 791) was better than that of Bihar, (Rs 645), M.P. (Rs 776) and U.P. (Rs 715).

According to the latest figures, the minister claimed, people living below the poverty line in Assam constituted 51.9 per cent. The percentage of Bihar was 57.47, for Maharashtra 57.73 and for Tamil Nadu 52.12.

Foreigners Issue

Refuting charge that the opposition was not being consulted on finding a solution to the foreigners issue, Mr Venkataraman said the Prime Minister had so far held several rounds of talks with the opposition leaders for arriving at a consensus.

He said several steps were being taken to stop the infiltration of unauthorised people from Bangladesh. A package of measures had been decided upon. They would no doubt take time for implementation, but the matter was not being neglected.

Mr Venkatasubbiah, minister of state for home, replying to Mr Ravindra Verma (Janata), said the Assam agitation was not the creation of the present government. It was a baby handed over by the Janata. The present government was, however, trying to find a solution. Several matters had already been agreed upon with the agitation leaders. There were some issues which still remained to be resolved.

Mr A. B. Vajpayee (BJP) wanted to know what had been done about the deportation of infiltrators who had come to the state after 1971. The border had not been sealed and infiltration from Bangladesh was continuing unabated. The opposition was not being taken into confidence in this regard, Mr Vajpayee added.

Alleging that another attempt was being made to install a Congress(I) government in the state, Mr Vajpayee said such attempts were bound to fail as they did in the past. He charged that during Mrs Anwara Taimur's regime appointments and transfers had been made on a communal basis. This had further complicated the situation in the state.

Mr Chitta Basu (Forward Bloc) said the government had promised to bring out a white paper on the Assam situation but had not fulfilled it.

CSO: 4220/7630

TAMIL NADU ISSUES WHITE PAPER ON FOOD SITUATION

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 25 Aug 81 p 7

[Text] Madras, August 24. Several adjournment motions given notice of by almost all opposition parties on the mass conversion of Harijans to Islam in Meenakshipuram village in Tirunelveli district and other places were disallowed by the speaker, Mr K. Rajam, in the Tamil Nadu assembly today.

Opposing the move, the leader of the house and finance minister, Mr V. R. Nedunchezian, informed the assembly that the state government could do very little in regard to dissuading Harijans from changing their faith. He said the constitution of India was quite clear that conversions were not permissible only if they were effected through inducement, allurement, force, coercion or by fraudulent means.

He said both the state and Central governments had instituted inquiries into the mass conversions. The state government was doing everything within its jurisdiction, consistent with its obligations, Mr Nedunchezian said. It was for the leaders of religion and heads of maths and other institutions to work for the creation of a climate which would check mass conversions.

The leader of the house said the conversion of Harijans to Christianity, Islam or Buddhism was not a new phenomenon nor the reconversion of some of them to Hinduism. According to the 1971 census, Hindus constituted 89.01 per cent in Tamil Nadu, while Christians accounted for 5.74 per cent and Muslims 5.1 per cent.

He denied that political harassment was responsible for the conversions, remarking such allegations had been made by opposition parties against all governments in the past. Only some 500 odd persons in Meenakshipuram had changed over to Islam. This occurred in February but was prominently publicised only some three months later. "Suddenly the quiet, remote village has become a pilgrimage centre," he remarked, and Hindu religious leaders "have woken up to the problem now." Earlier, opposition speakers called for immediate steps to create a feeling of security among Harijans and ending the hardships they were subjected to.

Starting the two-hour discussion on the admissibility of the motions, the deputy leader of the DMK, Mr K. Anbazhagan, said people wanted to know why the state government had allowed such a situation to develop. The CPI leader, Mr S. Alargarsamy, said the police and government officials had not paid due attention to

complaints of atrocities they were subjected to by Harijans Mr N. Sankariah (CPM) called for the removal of economic inequalities that handicapped Harijans.

Mr N. S. V. Chitthan (Congress-I), referring to a recent statement of the chief minister that foreign money had played a role in the mass conversions, urged the chief minister to come out with the full facts. He suggested the setting up of a permanent committee of assembly members to safeguard the interests of Harijans.

The lone Muslim member, Mr Shahu Hameed, challenged the chief minister to prove that foreign money was involved. If it was proved, Mr Hameed said, he was prepared to resign his assembly seat. If it was not proved, the chief minister should resign, he said. The Muslim League member said Harijans embraced Islam because of the continued atrocities inflicted on them.

Mr P. Mohammed Ismail (Janata) said it was unfair to blame the AIADMK government alone for the conversions because it was a national phenomenon and not one confined to Tamil Nadu. Mr Andi Thevar (Forward Bloc) said foreign money did play a role in the conversions and called for state and central probes in the matter.

Disallowing the motions after Mr Nedunchezhian's reply, the speaker remarked that the discussion on the admissibility of the motions took two hours--more than the normal one-hour that would have been allowed for adjournment.

CSO: 4220/7630

DOMINANT AKALI FACTION SUSPENDS GENERAL SECRETARY

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 25 Aug 81 p 10

[Text] Chandigarh, Aug 24--The dominant Akali Dal faction, the Sant Longowal group, faces another split with the suspension of Mr Sukhjinder Singh, who is supposed to have resigned from its general secretaryship. This is a victory for the moderates led by Mr Prakash Singh Badal. Sant Harchand Singh Longowal, president of the Dal, who was undecisive till now, has apparently decided to be with the moderates.

With Mr Sukhjinder Singh out of the picture. Mr Gurcharan Singh Tohra, president of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, who had been influencing the politics of the party and its divisions in the past, was bound to have a tough time. Mr Sukhjinder Singh, a supporter of Mr Tohra, had of late been favouring Akali extreme politics.

He had even gone to the extent of supporting the demand for Khalistan and was wanting the party convention at Amritsar to pass a resolution in support of the demand. He had been issuing harsh statements, sometimes unpleasant, against what he described as Hindu domination and indiscrimination against the Sikhs. This was against the stand of the Akali Dal and the attitude of the majority group led by Mr Badal, who favours cooperation with other communities in its fight against the Congress(I).

The extremist postures of Mr Sukhjinder Singh and Mr Tohra--at times even Sant Longowal got swayed by these slogans--isolated the party in Punjab politics. The Bharatiya Janata Party and the Janata had opposed the Akali stand earlier. The Communists, old allies of the Akali Dal, gave up their association because of the religious extremism.

The other faction led by Mr Jagdev Singh Talwandi favoured an agitation in support of the Anandpur Sahib resolution to embarrass the Longowal group for what they described as the latter's weekend policies. Another new party, Confederal Akali Dal, called for a new leadership. The Sant Akali Dal got into a tight corner.

Though it had decided to organize a massive protest march in Delhi in September, it could not set its house in order. Diametrically opposite statements continued to be issued by Mr Gadal and Mr Sukhjinder Singh. There were reports

of extremist speeches having been made by Mr Tohra during his recent foreign tour. Mr Sukhjinder Singh's extremist postures did not stop even after Mr Badal publicly announced through a Press conference that the Akali Dal stood for Hindu-Sikh unity, that it did not support the idea of a separate State and that the separatist demand was Congress(I)-inspired.

Mr Badal and his group have for long been embarrassed by Mr Tohra and Mr Sukhjinder Singh. They had created problems for Mr Badal when he headed the Akali Ministry in Punjab. But Mr Badal could not take a tough stand as Mr Talwandi had already deserted him.

Mr Tohra is isolated in the party. It is possible that extremists may join the Talwandi group. Besides, the Sant Group may try to oust Mr Tohra from the SGPC office.

CSO: 4220/7631

INDIA

DELHI CONCERNED OVER ATTACKS ON SRI LANKA TAMILS
Madras THE HINDU in English 15 Aug 81 p 1
(Text)

NEW DELHI Aug 14

This concern at the continuing attacks on Tamils in Sri Lanka has been conveyed both in Delhi and Colombo to the Sri Lankan Government in the hope that firm steps would be taken to protect them from increasing violence.

There is no secret on India's part in crediting in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka but the Government has now decided that what is happening in the South is unacceptable.

The External Affairs Ministry has been giving fairly detailed accounts from the Indian High Commission in Colombo of what has been happening in Sri Lanka and how people of Indian origin are being subjected to frequent attacks by extremist elements.

There have been reports even today of Indian-owned shops being looted and burnt on fire in the vicinity of Colombo.

The Sri Lankan Foreign Minister, Dr. Jayewardene, is touring Colombo this weekend and the Government has now agreed that it is惟 to the Government that it is惟 to the Tamil who are suffering in this way. He said "I cannot bear to see the Tamils like this. Whatever I do, whatever I decide, I will ensure the protection of them. No one person deserved to suffer so much."

Not without blame. But it is惟 to the Tamil who are suffering in this way. He said "I cannot bear to see the Tamils like this. Whatever I do, whatever I decide, I will ensure the protection of them. No one person deserved to suffer so much."

The Tamils themselves who are partly responsible for this tragic situation. It is for this reason that the Indian High Commissioner in Colombo has been urging the local Indian-origin population to exercise the utmost restraint even in the face of this grave provocation.

The Sri Lankan President continues to be held in high esteem in Delhi as a liberal statesman who is striving hard to promote racial harmony in the land by taking all possible steps to cool this difficult situation.

The Government of India does not want to add to its burdens by saying anything publicly which could complicate the problem.

It cannot also afford to make the people of Indian origin feel that in the name of diplomatic niceties the Government is not paying much attention to their plight. This is the kind of classic dilemma that India is obliged to face frequently in its relations with Sri Lanka which happily remain good despite these recurring racial incidents.

President's visit: The Prime Minister's public disclosure of the real reasons for the postponement of the President's visit did embarrass the Sri Lankan Government. But it would have been advisable for the President to have had a State visit to the island in the midst of these racial tensions, even if the Government of India had kept to the earlier excuse that the visit had to be put off because the President

and the Prime Minister could not be away from the country at the same time.

However, the Government of India has started talks on alternative dates for the visit and Sri Lanka itself has suggested that it would be more appropriate to have this trip towards the end of the year. The Indian side also feels that the racial situation will have improved by that time.

The President Mr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan is due to visit Nepal and Indonesia next month. And since Mrs. Gandhi will be away towards the end of September on a trip to Australia for the Commonwealth conference in October to Mexico for the North South summit and in November to try to address the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) conference and later visit Paris and possibly Moscow. It would not be possible for the President to go to Sri Lanka before December at the earliest.

Indians not affected: No Indian population has been affected in the disturbances in Jaffna and other areas. Mr. J. Dharmadasa, acting High Commissioner of Sri Lanka in India said in New Delhi today, reports P.

Except for some isolated incidents people of Indian origin in Sri Lanka particularly in the plantation areas were also not affected, he said.

The Sri Lankan Government had taken necessary measures for maintaining law and order. Mr. Dharmadasa said.

CSO: 4220/7626

HARD-CORE MIZOS SEEN TO INTENSIFY INSURGENCY

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 13, 14 Aug 81

[Two-part article by Kirit Bhaumik: "Mizoram Scene"]

[13 Aug 81 pp 1, 9]

[Text] End to Insurgency Urged

AIZAWL.

CONTRADICTORY urges have built up tension in this beautiful town sprawling over rounded hilltops where the craving for peace is getting smothered by an escalation of agitations and threats of renewed violence.

The people in general here want peace and an end to the 15-year-long insurgency and killings. But their hopes of achieving it are dwindling with preparations quite evidently going on for extremist action by a group of young men and students for what they call "furthering the cause of the Mizo people."

Attention is directed towards Delhi where talks are now on between the Union government and the Mizo National Front chief, Mr. Laldenga, for finding a solution to the "Mizo problem." While the elder politicians are hoping against hope that the talks will lead to an end to insurgency, the young men owing allegiance to the Mizo leaders are getting ready for the "second phase" of their movement.

Officials here were taken by surprise when the students last month organised a demonstration in front of a police station demanding the release of three student leaders arrested on the charge of extorting "donations" from non-Mizo residents. The police used tear-gas to disperse the mob, but were prudent enough not to provoke the students further and released the arrested boys unconditionally.

The demonstration assumed a规模 because it was known to have the backing of the MNF whose armed men were quite capable of using their weapons against the political opponents. This indeed is the crux of the problem here. Because of the arms they possess, the MNF men are able

to impose their authority in the capital town itself. Land allotments made by the state government have been "cancelled" by orders from the MNF and there is none here who will disobey them. Newspapers and printing presses were ordered to be closed and they were complied with. A newspaper editor had his limbs broken for his writings not liked by the MNF. The newspaper was allowed to function again after Mr. Laldenga intervened from Delhi.

To what extent the administration has been paralysed by the armed MNF men is illustrated by the fact that the railways had to put off the inauguration of the construction of a railway line in Mizoram because of threats by the insurgents. When the additional chief engineer of the North-Eastern Railways went to Bairabi in Mizoram to make the arrangements he was asked to part with his cash and other belongings by MNF men. The engineer and his staff left the place in panic.

Larger induction of the students into the MNF movement is a new phenomenon. The front is using the student body—Mizo Zirai Pawl—as a cover for its activities because it is obliged to keep the peace under its agreement with the Union government as long as the Delhi talks are on. Student volunteers have been pressed into service for the intensified "tax" collection drive especially in the urban areas.

The students' involvement is causing concern here because it has given a new lease of life to the MNF movement. The older people, who at one time nursed sympathy with the outlaws, are today completely alienated from the MNF because of the sufferings they had to undergo. They want an end to insurgency. But the students

are unaffected by these considerations and have become an easy prey to the MNF's extremist politics.

Flushed by its initial success, the MFP sent a student delegation to Delhi to submit a memorandum to the Prime Minister listing their demands. It brings out clearly the attitudes and objectives of the MNF. While expressing full support for Mr. Laldenga, the memorandum said that the MNF was not "waging war against the government of India for its own sake, nor do they (the Mizos) hate the non-Mizos. They have been pushed into violence in order to secure the Mizo people's aspirations and dignity."

Holding out the threat that the MNF would not be deterred from resorting to violence again "if compelled to do so to safeguard the lawful rights and national dignity" of the Mizos, the memorandum demanded "the reunification of the Mizo people and the restoration of their native land to them under a single administrative unit." It is a demand for a "greater Mizoram."

With the high hopes generated by the MNF propaganda machine about the outcome of the Delhi talks, it is hardly likely that the students and the MNF rank and file will be satisfied with what the Union government may offer. This is probably recognised by the underground. And so the preparations for the "second phase" of the movement.

The tax collection drive has been intensified and the funds are being taken out to the neighbouring countries—Burma and Bangladesh. According to official reports, the MNF commander, Lalravna, had recently slipped out across the border with Rs. 6 lakhs. He is said to have succeeded in establishing cordial relations with the garrison at Ramu Razai in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and making a substantial amount of arms available to the MNF. The MNF has also

(17 Aug 81 pp 1, 2)

[Text] Focus on Delhi Talks

AIZAWL.

WHILE the talks between the Union government and the MNF chief, Mr. Laldenga, have been universally welcomed here as an effort to bring peace to this troubled state concern is being expressed at the delay in arriving at an agreement, because it is giving time to the MNF to prepare for the 'second phase' of its movement.

The chief minister, Brig. T. Sanjivani, wants the Union government spell out clearly the terms acceptable to it for an agreement with the MNF and leave it to Mr. Laldenga to decide them or not. Prolongation of the dialogue, according to him, is only creating a situation favourable for the revival of insurgency.

Senior leaders of the ruling People's Conference would even like the Union government to go to the maximum possible extent in its wisdom to accommodate Mr. Laldenga if that can ensure peace in the state that is, if the MNF agrees to surrender all its arms and come underground.

The People's Conference president, Mr. Biakchungnunga, is confident that his party will be able to meet the MNF challenge in normal democratic politics once the arms surrender is secured. According to him, the people of Mizoram have turned their back to insurgency. They will not have any more of killings and lawlessness. But they are helpless with the armed men roaming the countryside.

The People's Conference vice-president, Mr. Bhalrhanga, suggests that the Union government should meet Mr. Laldenga's argument that tax collection by MNF men is necessary "because they have to eat" by offering to feed the over 500 men now underground until they are rehabilitated. This will bring to an end the biggest irritant for the people residing in Mizoram — the forcible collection of taxes.

Some politicians here, however, want the Union government to exercise extreme caution in arriving at a settlement with Mr. Laldenga. According to them, the government should first decide whether it wants to come to terms with insurgency. They feel that the trouble in Mizoram, as in some other north-eastern states, has been that insurgency has been an integral part of politics. Politicians have always sought support from underground insurgents for furthering their political objectives.

That insurgency is still considered to be a potent political weapon is clear from the fact that all the opposition parties in Mizoram have come out in support of Mr. Laldenga. They have, in fact, formed a joint committee ostensibly to back up the MNF chief in achieving his political objectives. But it is said that they have clustered round Mr. Laldenga only to get his underground's support for their own political objectives.

People's Conference leaders are concerned about the pernicious effect of the MNF exploiting the Mizo and non-Mizo issue on the younger generation. They say that an atmosphere reminiscent of 1979, when Mr. Laldenga had given a "quit notice" to the non-Mizos in Mizoram, has been created.

The students then created a row over a non-Mizo student being given a reserved seat in an agricultural college for which a qualified Mizo candidate could not be found. The student's father, a non-Mizo official, was given notice to quit Mizoram within seven days.

FEAR OF TERRORISM

They fear that if the situation is not brought under control soon, it can deteriorate to what it was in 1979 when several non-Mizos were murdered by MNF men in cold blood. Even women and children — family members of non-Mizos — were not spared. This could be repeated because the MNF, according

to them, now lacking people's support, is likely to choose "soft targets" as its victims. In other words, the MNF might again start turning away from insurgency to terrorism.

The key issue in the north-eastern states, according to senior politicians here, is whether insurgency should be allowed to influence overall political developments. They point out that for the first time in this region, the Mizoram chief minister, Brig. Soilo, who had connections with the underground in the earlier stages of his political career, has firmly turned against insurgency as a political weapon. He has opted for economic development as a counter-insurgency measure.

They are of the view that Mr. Laldenga, who derives his political strength from the weapons held by his men, cannot be expected to give up his sources of power easily. But some of his close associates, tired of their underground life, are keen to return to normal life. They will surrender irrespective of what the outcome of the Delhi talks will be and are only waiting in response to an appeal by Mr. Laldenga to hold on till the talks come to a conclusion.

However, there will still be a hard core, led by the extremist commander, Lalravna, who will refuse to surrender whatever the decision in Delhi. This can be seen from his recent activities like intensifying the "tax" collection drive and making arrangements for the replenishment of arms and men which the underground might lose through surrender of some groups. He may be enjoying the sympathy of Mr. Laldenga.

The People's Conference wants the Union government to make known what could be expected from the Delhi talks so that the MNF ceases to exploit the youths by raising exaggerated hopes. The party has drawn up a campaign plan for weaning away the youths from the influence of the MNF, which is said to have started recruitment of young men for training in insurgency. But the leaders complain that they are being hamstrung by the high hopes raised by the Delhi talks.

130: 4220/7622

CITU GENERAL COUNCIL CALLS FOR TRADE UNION UNITY

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 25 Aug 81 p 3

[Text] Howrah, Aug 24--The general council of the Centre of India Trade Unions now in session here since Friday reiterated in a resolution today the call for formation of a confederation of all trade unions centres and national federations. It urged that renewed efforts should be made to bring about such a united forum.

Mr P. Ramamurty, general secretary of the CITU, told reporters that the council welcomed the decisions of the National trade union convention "against the price rise and the anti-people policies of the Government" held in Bombay. About 40 industrial federations and eight central trade union organizations had participated.

The convention decided to observe a protest and demand day all over the country on November 3, workers' march to Parliament in the third week of November and a one-day strike in all industries, Mr Ramamurty, directed all CITU unions to ensure that the programme adopted at the national convention was observed.

The CITU general secretary alleged that in Haryana, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka their unions workers and leaders were subjected to "incessant attacks." The council noted with concern the repressive measures taken against the public sector employees of Bangalore, the suppression of the locomen's struggle and the attack on the workers in the Assam Tea Estates. He welcomed the decision of the National Campaign Committee to make a complaint to the ILO.

Mr Ramamurty alleged that the existing safety measures in the coal mines were inadequate and led to several coal mine disasters. Regarding the increase in railway accidents he said that it was due to the lack of proper maintenance for which higher officials should be held responsible.

Regarding the Sixth Five-Year Plan the meeting recorded its strong protest against the policies of "capitalist planning" and demanded an immediate moratorium on foreign debt payments, nationalization of monopoly houses and increased direct taxation on higher income groups.

(CSD) 4220/7631

LALDENGA OPTIMISTIC ON MIZO SETTLEMENT

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 27 Aug 81 p 1

[Text] Shillong, Aug 26 (UNI)--Rebel Mizo National Front chief Laldenga said today that a 'concrete solution to the Mizo problem is very much in the offing' despite the mutual suspicion which existed in the minds of the two parties--the Centre and MNF--because of 15 years' of insurgency.

In a prepared speech on his arrival at the Aizawl Mr Laldenga said the Centre had not acceded to some of the demands of the MNF, but has given some counter-proposals which he was carrying to the headquarters for consultation with the 15-member executive committee.

Among the Central proposals was granting statehood for the Union Territory preceded by the dismissal of the Peoples Conference Ministry headed by Brig. T. Sailo, he stated.

The Centre is understood to have rejected the MNF proposals for Greater Mizoram and separate flag and constitution for it.

Mr Laldenga will later fly to Parva and then reach the MNF headquarters in the Arakan Hills after a three-day trek. He is being accompanied by two of the underground 'ministers' and his wife on the peace mission.

Although a Mizo state on the Nagaland pattern may not be acceptable(to the MNF) the terms offered by the Centre would be discussed with the national executive and further negotiations would continue he added.

CSO: 4220/7645

PRESS COUNCIL ASKS POWERS AGAINST ERRING DAILIES

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 26 Aug 81 p 13

[Text] New Delhi, August 25 (PTI): The Press Council of India has urged the government to vest it with minimum powers to enforce decisions on newspapers indicated or censured by it repeatedly.

In its annual report presented today to the Lok Sabha by the information and broadcasting minister, Mr Vasant Sathe, the council suggested to the government to insert an express provision in section 14 of the Press Council Act, 1978, empowering it to recommend to the Central and state governments and also to public sector undertakings to discontinue issuance of advertisements to erring newspapers.

The council, among other things, wants power to disallow growth rate in allocation of newsprint to erring and defaulting newspapers for a period not exceeding two years or to recommend to the posts and telegraph department to suspend the concessional postage registrations for a period not exceeding one year.

Journalists and editors found to commit any professional misconduct thrice be denied facilities of accreditation for a period not exceeding six months.

The council also recommended that as in the case of newspapers, it should be empowered to warn, admonish or censure authorities, including the government, and the council's observation be placed on the table of both the houses of parliament and the legislatures of the states concerned.

The council decided to constitute the appellate board consisting of a chairman and a member.

The council, during 1980, received 100 new complaints, including 40 against the authorities and 60 against newspapers and journalists.

In a complaint, there were allegations of foreign money being pumped into newspaper organisations in the country.

These allegations could not be sustained before the council by lack of sufficient evidence and the case was accordingly treated as closed.

CSO: 4220/7633

NORTHEASTERN COUNCIL REPORTEDLY UNDER STRAIN

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 26 Aug 81 p 7

[Text] Shillong, August 24. The North-eastern Council (NEC), set up in 1973 under an act of parliament as a unique experiment in integrated development of the north-eastern region, is rocked by an unseemly controversy over the choice of a new chairman consequent upon the government's decision to do away with the tradition of having a common governor for the north-eastern states who had so far held dual responsibilities.

Mr B. K. Nehru and later Mr L. P. Singh, as governor of Assam, Nagaland, Manipur Tripura and Meghalaya had been NEC chairman. But ever since Mr L. P. Singh laid down office on August 12 following the appointment of Mr Prakash Mehrotra as governor of Assam and Meghalaya and Mr S. M. H. Burney as governor of Nagaland, Manipur and Tripura, the post of NEC chairman has remained vacant.

While the Centre has yet to make up its mind in regard to the choice of the NEC chairman, the chief minister of Tripura, Mr Nripendra Chakraborty, has expressed the view that the chief ministers of the north-eastern region should preside over the meetings of the council by rotation.

Mr Mehrotra is not averse to holding the dual charge if the Centre so wishes.

The chief ministers of the north-eastern states, at the last NEC meeting in Itanagar in Arunachal Pradesh on August 7, had unanimously adopted a resolution inviting the attention of the Centre to the changed context consequent on the appointment of more than one governor for the northeastern states and urging it to appoint an eminent economist or a distinguished planner as the working chairman of NEC.

The meeting of the council, the resolution said, might be presided over by the chief ministers by rotation.

Adviser's Support

Significantly, the resolution was also signed by the adviser to the governor of President-ruled Assam much to the chagrin of Mr L. P. Singh, who was then also holding the office of chairman of the council.

The Centre, it is understood, is not in favour of the suggestion made in the resolution. It is of the opinion that the elevation of the post of secretary

of the council to a status on a par with secretary to the Union government obviates the need for appointing a full-time working chairman of the council.

A proposal was mooted by Mr Burney, while he was still the Union home secretary, that the Union home minister himself should hold the office of chairman of the council, but Mr Zail Singh has not favoured the idea presumably because it might offend the sensibilities of the chief ministers and also strengthen the suspicion that the NEC was designed as a supergovernment.

The latest thinking in New Delhi, according to informed sources, is to entrust the chairmanship to the governor of Assam and Meghalaya, Mr Prakash Mehrotra. The fact that the NEC and Mr Mehrotra's headquarters are located in Shillong seems to have weighed heavily with policy makers in New Delhi.

It is however doubtful if the chief ministers will be happy with this "idea" and even if they accept the appointment of Mr Mehrotra, it is not certain that he will be able to exercise sufficient influence over the chief ministers of Nagaland, Manipur and Tripura, as these states are now under the charge of Mr Burney.

According to observers, the NEC is today at the crossroads and its functioning as well as its very future as an instrument for integrated development of the region will depend on the choice of its new chairman. They point out that already the authority of the council has eroded and the organization is under severe strain.

CSO: 4220/7633

INDIA

NAIR CAUSES SECOND SPLIT IN KERALA RSP

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 27 Aug 81 p 12

[Text] Trivandrum, August 26--The founder leader of the Revolutionary Socialist Party, Mr N. Srikantan Nair, has caused a second split in the party by again breaking away from the official group.

The first split in the party took place ten years ago. That group, which functioned as the anti-Congress National Party, is now an ally of the Congress(I) and calls itself the RSP (National).

The National Party disowned the (RSP) (National) after the official group returned to its fold following the formation of the CPM-led left democratic government in Kerala.

Mr Nair, who was elected secretary of the breakaway party, yesterday claimed that parallel committees would be organised in all districts. He has the support of one of the six MLAs in the ruling front, Mr Sivadasan, who was elected from Quilon.

His association with the new group would, however, not affect the ruling front as Mr Nair had made it clear that his group stood for a left front. But, it is not yet certain that the ruling front will recognise the breakaway group.

The party leaders, like Mr Tridib Choudhary from West Bengal, last month tried to avert the split. He and other party leaders from the state are expected to visit Kerala again for another attempt at reconciliation.

CSO: 4220/7640

ELECTION REFORM PROPOSALS UNDER CONSIDERATION

Madras THE HINDU in English 25 Aug 81 p 7

(Text)

NEW DELHI Aug 24

Despite the increased public interest in the urgency of electoral reforms an early decision by the Government on the numerous proposals including those by the Chief Election Commissioner is unlikely. Also the chances of the Government accepting the suggestions for structural changes or subsidy to candidates are virtually nil.

The procedure set by the Government envisages internal discussion and consultation with the Opposition parties which as past experience shows could be time-consuming.

The question of poll reforms had been under discussion since 1969 when the Election Commission for the first time made comprehensive proposals for changes in the representation of the People Act. These had been examined at various levels — by a joint committee of Parliament by a committee appointed by the late J P Narayan on behalf of the Citizens

for Democracy and a Cabinet sub-committee during the Janata regime.

Mrs Indira Gandhi had been on record as having disfavoured the West German-type list system (under which half the number of seats in Parliament and legislatures are filled through indirect election) and proportional representation. These methods, according to her, were not practical for a country of the size of India. The current preliminary examination of the various suggestions for electoral reforms proceeds from this premise.

An official document lists the various proposals for reforms under the following heads: Proposal to reduce wasteful expenditure on elections, corrupt practices, electoral offences, misuse of official machinery by political parties, election disputes, subsidy to candidates, election expenses, facilities to candidates and parties at Government expense, elimination of frivolous candidates, recommendation of the Election Commission for amendments to the 1950 Act, amendments to the 1951 Act and miscellaneous.

On the basis of the preliminary examination it says the recommendations have been grouped into three categories: (1) those involving important issues of policy; (2) those which *prima facie* appear to be acceptable; and (3) those which *prima facie* appear to be not acceptable.

The pleas for adopting the list system or subsidy to candidates are even to be included in the not acceptable category.

In reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha on whether the Government had taken any decision on the recommendations of the Election Commissioner the Law Minister Mr Shri Shankar said: "No decision on the proposals has yet been taken. The proposals would not only require careful consideration of the full implications but also discussions with political parties and in some cases with the State Governments as well. Such discussions could only be held after certain provisional conclusions have been arrived at on the proposals."

ISCI: 422/7632

MIDTERM ELECTIONS POSSIBLE IN THREE STATES

Madras THE HINDU in English 26 Aug 81 p 1

[Text]

NEW DELHI, Aug 25

Though there are no formal decisions, certainly not at the official level, the talk of a mid-term poll for the Assemblies in Jammu and Kashmir, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka has, of late, gained frequency.

The talk emanates from the informal calculations of the ruling parties, or some sections of them, in the three States that their chances of return to power would be better in an early poll.

Of course, the decision, if necessary, would be taken at the political level by the Congress (I) high command in the case of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. The official machinery would come into the picture if and when the ruling parties formally decide to cut short the terms of the Assemblies.

As things stand, the elections in the three States are due only in early 1983. In Jammu and Kashmir, the last poll was held in 1977, but the tenure of the Assembly there is six years.

Unlike as in the rest of India, where the emergency-era decision to extend the life of the Assemblies from five to six years was reversed during the Janata rule, the increased term remains

unchanged in Jammu and Kashmir. (Because of the special status of the State, the decision has to be taken by I)

Kashmir case

Several arguments are advanced by those favouring an early poll in the three States.

In Jammu and Kashmir the Chief Minister, Sheikh Abdullah, would perhaps like to see his son, Dr Farooq Abdullah, now the head of the ruling National Conference, secure in the Government and then succeed him when he (the Sheikh) has the situation firmly in his grip.

A poll next year is, therefore, considered a better proposition.

In Karnataka a mid-term poll, according to the assessment of at least one section of the ruling party, would help it because the Opposition is in disarray and it would be better to have a trial of strength before the non-Congress (I) elements consolidate themselves.

In Andhra Pradesh, the Chief Minister Mr T. Aniyah himself has spoken of the possibility of advancing the date of the poll. Obviously here, too, it is felt delay could adversely affect the ruling party's chances.

CSO: 4220/7636

SHORT-TERM APPOINTMENTS THREATEN COURT'S INDEPENDENCE

Madras, THE HINDU in English 14 Aug 81 p 7

[Text]

NEW DELHI Aug 13

Mr S P Gupta senior advocate Aghaabad argued in the Supreme Court today that appointment of additional judges to High Courts only for short terms when there were permanent vacancies was destructive of the independence of judiciary under the Constitution.

The guarantee of tenure of High Court judges constituted an essential feature of the independence of judiciary.

A threat: The short-term appointments were meant to be a threat to those judges that if their judgments were not to the liking of the government of the day—they might not be continued.

It was not open to the President (i.e.) the executive to appoint only additional judges even though permanent vacancies existed.

Under Article 224 (additional High Court judges) additional judges could be appointed only if there were arrears and the workload was heavy for the permanent judges.

When one was appointed either as a permanent or an additional judge he was a judge of the High Court concerned under Article 216 of the Constitution.

His independence to function in terms of the oath of office should be ensured. His tenure could not be cut short or allowed to lapse despite the existence of permanent vacancies except for cogent reasons in terms of the provisions of the Constitution Mr Gupta (himself a petitioner) said.

A special seven-judge Bench consisting of Mr Justice P N Bhagwati Mr Justice A C Gupta Mr Justice S Murtaza Faiz Ali Mr Justice V D Tulzapurkar Mr Justice D A Desai Mr Justice R S Patrak and Mr Justice E S Venkataramiah was hearing a batch of petitions challenging the validity of the policy of the Government giving short term extensions to additional

judges and also a recent circular of the Union Law Minister for seeking the consent of additional judges for transfer to other High Courts.

Mr Gupta said the Constitution-makers did not visualise that additional judges would be kept on probation like ordinary civil servants.

The suitability and fitness of a person should be gone into before he was appointed as an additional judge.

If such an additional judge was subsequently found not suitable for a relevant reason it was for the Chief Justice of the High Court and the Chief Justice of India—and not for the Government—to take steps under the law not to continue him in the post.

Assailing the impugned circular of the Law Minister counsel said that requiring advance consent for transfer of additional judges and also of those likely to be appointed amounted to the imposition of conditions of eligibility on persons to be considered for appointment and also on sifting additional judges.

This letter was hence ultra vires of Article 217 (appointment of High Court judges).

Judges from outside State: The policy of the Union Government that one-third strength of a High Court should be from outside the State concerned had the effect of amending the Constitution and therefore ultra vires of Article 217.

Having regard to the nature of the functions of the judges which included deciding disputes between the State and the citizen in the modern welfare State the advice of Council of Ministers on appointment of High Court judges (and also the Supreme Court) should not bind the President.

In these matters the recommendations of the Chief Justice of India and the Chief Justice of the State High Court should prevail Mr Gupta said.

ISJ: 422 7624

GOVERNMENT TO CAMPAIGN AGAINST HOARDING

Madras THE HINDU in English 26 Aug 81 p 1

[Article by G. K. Reddy]

(Text)

NEW DELHI Aug 25

The Government intends to make full use of the special powers conferred on the Executive by Parliament today for curbing blackmarketing, hoarding and profiteering.

The Lok Sabha passed today the Essential Commodities (Special Provisions) Bill and the Prevention of Blackmarketing and Maintenance of Essential Supplies (Amendment) Bill which were adopted by the Rajya Sabha in the last session.

The two Bills which now await the President's assent provide for preventive detention, setting up of special courts and summary trial of those accused of black marketing, hoarding and price manipulation.

Though some Opposition members were somewhat sceptical about the Government's determination to deal firmly with the politically influential trading interests they fully supported the two Bills in the hope that they would have a deterrent effect on the blackmarketeers and hoarders who were now indulging in such malpractices with impunity in the absence of any effective legislation against economic offences.

But the Agriculture Minister, Ranendra Singh promised that the Government would make full use of these special powers to stamp out these evils and bring relief to the hard pressed people.

Five-year term. The Essential Commodities (Special Provisions) Bill has a five-year limit. The Minister assured the House that it could be revoked earlier if the traders behaved better and refrained from economic offences.

He also maintained that recourse

to special courts to punish the offenders promptly through summary trials was no reflection on the country's judicial system since the Bill provided for appeals in the normal course.

Farmers safe: The Opposition Parties expressed apprehension that the provisions of the other Bill—Prevention of Blackmarketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill—might be used to bring pressure on farmers with threats of punishment to part with their produce at unremunerative prices.

The Deputy Minister for Civil Supplies Mr. Bramman Mahanty who piloted this Bill said the Government had the dual responsibility of ensuring reasonable returns to the farmers and protecting consumer interests.

List of offenders: After the Lok Sabha passed the two Bills, the Ministries concerned got busy with the follow-up measures for the crackdown on blackmarketeers and hoarders in close concert with the State Governments. The Central Intelligence and Enforcement Agencies have already drawn up a list of suspected hoarders and blackmarketeers in a large number of cities and towns.

One reason why the Centre did not come out with any ordinances during the inter-session period for arming itself with additional powers for curbing these offences was that these Bills were already pending before Parliament.

But in delaying these measures for whatever reason the Government exposed itself to the accusation that it lacked the political will to take strong action against the big sharks who were cornering the stocks, manipulating prices and making enormous profits.

The Government now wants to demonstrate that it has both the political will and administrative capacity to deal with them. Having waited for so long for the passage of these two Bills

by Parliament, it can have no excuse for delaying the follow-up action any longer if it is determined to punish these guilty of economic offences.

Tax raids

The fact that it has not been able to do much in tackling the problem of black money has certainly undermined the credibility of the Government. The Finance Minister Mr. R. Venkataraman indicated in the Lok Sabha today in the course of his reply to a calling attention motion on the big income-tax racket unearthed in Bombay that income-tax raids are going to be intensified to track down the culprits.

The recent package of economic measure has made little or no impact at all on the price situation. The country is faced with not only spiraling deficits but also increasing shortages. Almost all items in short supply go into the blackmarket.

It is possible to bring down the prices at least a few select items through a country-wide monitoring drive. This will help restore the waning public confidence in the Government's determination to use the special powers it has acquired for the larger good of the people.

The members of the Ruling Party and the Opposition who participated in the debate seemed to agree that the best way of dispelling the skepticism of the Opposition is to demonstrate convincingly that the Government means business while Parliament is not in session. The industrialists, shopkeepers and the distributive traders as well as agriculture practices and the grain merchants will behave better if they realize they are going to face deterrent punishment.

PURCHASE FUNDS SECURED FOR BUYING MIRAGE 2000

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 27 Aug 81 p 1

[Article by B. K. Joshi: "L900 M. Set Apart To Buy Mirage 2000"]

[Text] London, August 26. Preliminary arrangements have been made for financing the planned Franco-Indian deal for Mirage 2,000 aircraft. An initial amount of L900 million has been earmarked, although the total value of the contract is yet to be fixed, according to a TIMES despatch from Paris.

The deal under negotiations for two years is expected to be closed in September when an Indian military mission visits France to discuss delivery schedules and armaments systems for the aircraft.

Under the deal, 45 of the aircraft would be built in France, 45 partly in France and partly in India and 65 more entirely in India.

The aircraft is now under development by Dassault Company, which is high on the list of firms to be nationalised by the French government. The first prototype of this aircraft flew in 1978, and delivery for the French Air Force would begin in 1983.

Mirage 2,000 can fly at speeds higher than Mach-2 and has a combat radius similar to F-16, which is to be acquired by Pakistan. Its weapon carrying capacity is also similar to that of F-16. The cost of both is also stated to be in the same range.

Mirage 2,000 has two 30-mm cannons and takes as standard interception weapons two Matra Super 530 missiles and Matra 550 Magic missiles. It will have a new pulse Doppler radar which can detect targets at altitudes within a range of around 60 miles.

The aircraft is fitted with inertial navigation equipment, enabling it to fly low towards its target and reach it accurately.

The TIMES despatch said that the Franco-Indian negotiations for the sale of Mirage 2,000 have been given a fresh impetus by the election of the new Socialist government in France, which considers India, together with Mexico and Algeria, as a key element for building better relations between developing nations and the industrialised world.

CSO: 4220/7640

INDIA

RAJYA SABHA DISCUSSES FOREIGN TRAINING OF GUERRILLAS

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 28 Aug 81 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, Aug 27--The government's refusal to disclose the names of neighbouring countries which were allegedly training guerrillas and sending them to India led to sharp exchange between the chairman and some Opposition members in the Rajya Sabha today.

The chairman's remark that "I am here to protect the interest of the country" provoked sharp protests from Mr Piloo Mody (J) and Mr N. P. Shahi (LD). His duty was to "protect" members in the House, Mr Mody said. If he wanted to protect the interest of the country "we will send you to the borders." Then, Mr Mody addressed the Prime Minister (who was present in the House) and said: "Please give him an appointment in the Border Security Force."

Mr Mody objected when the chairman would not allow members' supplementary about the countries which were training guerrillas. The chairman said he was not protecting the Government. But Mr Mody was heard remarking: "you have started advising the Government."

Despite these sharp exchanges, Mr Zail Singh, Union Home Minister and Mr Yogen-dra Makwana, Minister of State for Home Affairs, declined to give names of such neighbours on the plea that it would be against public interest and security of the country.

An Opposition member shouted that the Minister was concealing information supplied to the House earlier. The chairman said: "The Minister was not concealing the information but it is not diplomatic."

Replying to a question of Mrs Najma Heptulla (C-I), Mr Makwana said guerrillas were being tra'ned by some neighbouring countries and sent to Mizoram and some other places. The Government was watching the situation and whenever possible was intercepting the influx of guerrillas into the country.

There was a discussion between Mr Zail Singh and Mr Makwana when supplemen-taries were being asked. Mrs Gandhi was seen prompting the Home Minister.

When no direct reply came, Mr Shahi asked pointedly whether the neighbouring countries involved were Bangladesh and China. Mr Hidayatullah said he would not force the Government to give the requisite information.

At this stage, Mr Zail Singh said members should not press for such information on the plea that conditions in Assam were not normal and talks were in progress over the foreign nationals' issue.

When Mr J. B. Mathur (BJP) wanted to know whether the Government would treat illegal infiltrators as refugees, Mr Makwana replied that they had come to India because of historical reasons and talks were going on to decide the cut-off date. "There cannot be any ready or cut and dried reply to such questions," the chairman remarked.

CSO: 4220/7649

TEAM TO ASSESS WAR DAMAGE IN KAMPUCHEA

Madras THE HINDU in English 27 Aug 81 p 1

[Text]

NEW DELHI, Aug 26

The Government has agreed to send an inter-ministerial delegation to Kampuchea next month to assess the war damage and report back on the assistance India can render in rehabilitating its shattered economy.

The Heng Samrin regime is seeking massive help from India in restoring its ports, railways and telecommunications, repairing the damaged hospitals, power houses and schools, restarting the affected industrial units and resuming agricultural operations.

Though the Soviet Union and Vietnam are already helping in its economic reconstruction, the Kampuchean Government wants to obtain maximum assistance from India with its middle-level technology that is more applicable to the local conditions. It is also keen on demonstrating that Mr Heng Samrin and his colleagues are not over-dependent on Vietnam.

The Foreign Minister of Kampuchea, Mr Hun Sen, who arrived today on a six-day visit to India, was accorded an exceptionally warm welcome since it was the first major contact between the two Governments after the Indian recognition of the Kampuchean regime last year.

The visit is arousing considerable interest among foreign diplomats here because of its timing and the context in which it is taking place.

International meet: The United States and its western allies, China and the South-East Asian nations continue to maintain that the Kampuchean problem can be settled only through an international conference.

It was largely on their insistence that the recent UN sponsored conference was held in New York which adopted a declaration calling for the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces as a starting point for any peaceful

settlement.

The Heng Samrin regime has been suggesting a regional conference between the three Indo-China States and the five ASEAN member countries in the presence of a UN representative if not under its auspices. The purpose of this restricted conference is to keep the big powers out and let the regional countries concerned arrive at an amicable solution.

In declining the UN Secretary-General's invitation to the UN sponsored conference, India had taken the stand that a regional conference suggested by the Heng Samrin regime could precede a wider international conference. There was no harm, in its view, in letting the regional countries explore the possibilities of a settlement.

A number of non-aligned countries including the ASEAN group, which participated in the UN sponsored conference, went along with the resolution adopted by the foreign ministers' conference in Delhi early this year calling for the withdrawal of all foreign forces. The resolution did not specifically refer to the Vietnamese presence but clubbed it together with the intervention of other foreign forces.

But China strongly opposed the follow-up suggestion by ASEAN that after the withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops all armed factions operating on either side should be disarmed to prevent renewal of the fighting and create peaceful conditions for settling Kampuchea's future through free elections.

It argued that the plea for disarming the forces of both Pol Pot and Heng Samrin would amount to equating a legal government still recognised by the great majority of UN members with a usurper regime installed by Vietnam through military intervention.

Purpose of talks: All these differing approaches came in for mention in one context or the other at the talks between the Foreign Minister of Kampuchea and the Indian External Affairs Minister this afternoon. But the purpose of these discussions was not to pass any value judgments on the relative merits of a regional or international

effort to resolve the Kampuchean tangle.

The two sides were concerned about how best Kampuchea could go ahead with its economic rehabilitation, with the assistance it could receive from friendly countries like India unhampered by the manoeuvres of the great powers pulling in different directions. It was in this context that India had agreed to send an inter-ministerial team to see what could be done to help Kampuchea in its reconstruction.

The Government of India is satisfied that, whatever the attitude of the Kampuchean people to the continued presence of the Vietnamese forces, no sensible section of opinion would want to go back to the rule of Pol Pot who had liquidated in cold blood with a genocidal impulse more than one-third of the country's population.

It sees no justification at all for indulging in hair-splitting argumentation over the regularities of the Vietnamese intervention.

Interesting development: An interesting development that has not gone unnoticed is that though the ASEAN countries have been lining up with China and the US in opposing the Vietnamese military presence in Kampuchea, they are becoming increasingly wary of the wider implications of the Sino-American affinity which they fear might affect their own regional interests.

The anti-Soviet and anti-Vietnamese overtones of this relationship between Beijing and Washington cannot assuage their apprehensions that they can no longer depend on the US to shield them from Chinese pressures.

All these themes, whatever their interrelation or interaction will find greater expression during the formal and informal talks the visiting Kampuchean Foreign Minister will have in Delhi.

After he has concluded his talks with Mr P V Narasimha Rao and discussed the aid prospects with the Ministers of Agriculture, Commerce, Industry and Education, he will meet Mrs Gandhi on Friday to round off his wide-ranging exchanges.

ROLE OF CSIR IN SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENT REVIEWED

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 26 Aug 81 p 7

[Article by A. M. Zutshi 'Gulzar': "CSIR and National Scientific Development During Last Two Years!!"; dated 22 August 1981]

[Text] The primary objective of the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research, established in the 40s, is to create a base of scientific capability and excellence over a wide spectrum of science and technology to enable it to carry out research of value for the development of industries and other sectors of economy.

Today with its 35 national laboratories/institutes and 2 industrial research associations supported by 71 extension centres, field stations etc. spread over the length and breadth of the country CSIR is one of the largest State-supported R&D organisations of the world. It has on its rolls more than 4,500 scientists with a supporting staff of over 14,000. The total number of processes released to industry till the end of March, 1981 is 1,293 out of which 571 were reported to be in production. This may create an impression that the entire activity of CSIR relates only to this aspect of release of processes and know-how to be measured in terms of premia and royalties earned. That this is not the case can be understood if it is realised that CSIR, having established a base as per the primary objective, has used it to provide national standards, testing facilities, consultancy services, undertaking of sponsored research, production of papers, monographs technical and feasibility reports, carrying out evaluation studies and offering advice to Government and industry, popularisation of science and publication of scientific journals, award of fellowships, operation of the Scientists' Pool and providing technical assistance to other developing countries.

The areas of collaboration of CSIR with various ministries and departments have been increasing from year to year. A number of projects continued to be undertaken by the laboratories in collaboration with different ministries/departments of the Government both at the Centre and in the States. Design and consultancy capabilities in many specialised areas have been developed by the laboratories. A number of collaborative programmes have been undertaken by the laboratories with various universities in specific areas. Collaborative programmes have also been undertaken with international agencies in several areas. The setting up of national facilities by CSIR has added distinctively to the scientific and technological potential of the country as a whole.

Thus it can be seen that CSIR renders wide-ranging services to support the national infrastructure in the achievement of self-reliance.

Some highlights of the contribution of the national laboratories and the various units at the headquarters to different sectors of national economy such as the public sector, private sector, Government departments etc, during the last year and a half, are given herein. It is hoped that this will give an insight into the range of activities of CSIR and national laboratories.

Resources Development

A number of laboratories have been engaged in this area both on-shore and off-shore. A significant development has been the success that the National Institute of Oceanography, Goa has achieved in exploration of minerals in the ocean-bed. Polymetallic (manganese) nodules have been collected by NIO under a programme of exploration of deep-sea mineral deposits in the Indian Ocean. NIO's Oceanographic ship 'R V Gaveshani' collected the first sample of polymetallic nodules, during its 86th cruise, from a depth of 3.6 km on 20 January 1981.

The nodules contain nickel, copper and cobalt, besides manganese and iron. India is the seventh country in the world to have developed capability to collect polymetallic nodules from deep-sea floor, the other countries being USA, UK, USSR, Japan, West Germany and France.

Encouraged by the results of this survey, the NIO scientists are planning to extend the survey of nodules to other areas in the Indian Ocean, especially the central Indian Ocean, where large areas are reported to be carpeted with high-grade polymetallic nodules.

With the collection of the nodules by NIO, the project enters the second phase, under which the other CSIR laboratories will initiate researches on the mining, recovery beneficiation and metallurgy of the nodules. NIO contributed significantly towards the development of off-shore oil fields and a number of surveys for the Oil & Natural Gas Commission and the Oil India Ltd., were undertaken at Bombay High, Kori Great and Direction Bank, Muru and Godavari river basins. The surveys were aimed at (a) locating and finding out the nature of pipelines already laid (b) studying the bottom topography of the drilling sites (c) conducting oceanographic studies to support drilling activities and (d) position fixing of drilling rigs.

Two laboratories that have offered several innovative techniques and methods for survey of coals and coal mining are the Central Fuel Research Institute, Jealgora and the Central Mining Research Station at Dhanbad. Work carried out under the Resource Quality Assessment Programme at the seven Coal Survey Units of CFRI covers investigations on 35 coalfields. 100 boreholes drilled in 110 blocks have been studied comprising a total corelength of 21,000 m. analysing 8000 samples in all. In addition, work has been continued on physical and chemical survey of coals including lab scale beneficiation tests for aid to industry (900 samples) and railways (2,000 samples). The value of work has been estimated at over Rs 24.5 lakh.

On the basis of recommendations of CMRS huge quantities of coal have been mined underneath railway line and large structures without damage to track or the buildings. CMRS has also developed a new method of 'in situ' degasification in coal seams by bacterial infusion. The results obtained by way of reduction of methane emission are quite encouraging.

At the request of the Geological Survey of India (GSI), 10,600 line km. or airborne geophysical surveys, employing magnetometric and scientillometric methods were carried out over the Cuddapah Basin. This forms a part of a total of 30,000 line km. sponsored last year by GSI. The techniques and instrumentation for these surveys were earlier developed at NGRI.

NGRI (National Geophysical Research Institute, Hyderabad) and Groundwater Survey & Development Agency (GSDA), Maharashtra have jointly selected two sub-basins (Godavari-Purna and Kukadi) in Aurangabad and Ahmednagar districts of Maharashtra for 'Integrated hydrogeological and geophysical studies.' These sub-basins (each covering 1000 sq km. area) come under moderate and scarce rainfall regions of the State. Other areas under investigation are Lower Maner Basin (Ramanujapuram area) and Marvanka Basin (Anantpur area), Andhra Pradesh.

The Central Glass & Ceramic Research Institute, Calcutta has been undertaking resources quality assessment surveys for various State Governments. Last year, a consultancy project was sponsored by the Maharashtra State Mining Corporation Ltd., for evaluation of aluminous minerals from Bhand, Maharashtra. The minerals were found suitable for making high alumina refractories containing up to 72 per cent alumina.

The Indian Institute of Petroleum Dehradun has been working in close collaboration with the Ministry of Petroleum, Oil India Ltd. and other refineries. After completing detailed studies on actual production samples of Bombay High crude oil, IIP prepared a "Bombay High Crude Oil Hand Book" which gives comprehensive basic data on all aspects of this crude. This hand book which has been prepared for the Oil Industry Development Board would serve the needs of various refineries using Bombay High Crude, for processing and design work.

The national Metallurgical Laboratory, Jamshedpur has been breaking fresh ground in offering its expertise in the technology of steel-making to other developing countries as well.

An assignment on beneficiation of two low grade oolitic iron ores from Syria, with strict adherence to time schedules referred to NML through the Metallurgical and Engineering Consultants (MECON) Ranchi was completed satisfactorily. The aim of the investigation was to establish an iron and steel complex in Syria based on their raw materials.

After 4 million tonnes of complex lead and zinc ore deposits are reported in the Romegangri-Canekga and Chakula areas of Bhutan as sulphides in partly oxidised and fully oxidised forms. Fully oxidised ore is reported to be of the order of about 3 million tonnes. Bench scale investigations on the oxidised ore of Chakula area, assaying about 25 per cent zinc and 4.5 per cent lead were conducted by NML. This project was sponsored by the Geological Survey of India.

A comprehensive and voluminous publication entitled "Wealth of India" brought out by the Publications and Information Directorate, New Delhi contains vital information on all natural and industrial products of the country as a whole. The publication is marked by excellence in production scale runs confirmed the reuse potential and efficiency the matter of scientific identification, classification, description, origin and other aspects of the country's wealth. The publication is undergoing revision in parts and is also being brought out in Hindi in the name of Bharat ki Sampada.

Biotechnologies

There are at present 10 national laboratories/institutes in the area of biological sciences and over the years they have developed a strong capability in biotechnology particularly in finding out new and adaptive technologies for the production of drugs and pharmaceuticals, basic and fine chemicals, pesticides and in agro and post-harvest technologies. A few of them have also been offered to other developing countries. For instance, pilot plant for the manufacture of diosgenin and progesterone based on CSIR technology developed at RRL, Jammu was set up in Burma under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme of the Government of India. Pilot plants for the manufacture of citrus juice concentrate and miltone have been set up by the Central Food Technological Research Institute, Mysore for the Central Research Organisation, Rangoon, Burma.

The Council has been one of the foremost agencies in the country to anticipate advances in biological science. Realising the need for undertaking programmes in forward areas of biology, the Council set up as early as in 1977, the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology at Hyderabad. The establishment of CCMB fulfils a long-felt need in the country for providing the necessary thrust in the areas of molecular and cellular biology, recognised as frontier areas the world over. The Centre is a unique institution of its kind established in India with the primary objective of conducting research in frontier and multi-disciplinary areas of modern biology with a view to seeking potential applications in agricultural, veterinary and medical sciences and industry. At present the Centre is engaged in projects on regulation cell division and malignant transformation, new proteins from seminal plasma, reversible denaturation of proteins, preparation of fine biochemicals etc. Already the laboratory has transferred to the industry a process for isolation of papain concentrate and crystalline papain--used in pharmaceutical industries.

The new cervical dilator (Isaptent I), which was developed by the Central Drug Research Institute, Lucknow is now under production by a Bombay firm and is being marketed under the trade name of Dilex-C. The device is made from the indigenously available Isapgol seed husk and is better and cheaper than the imported "laminaria tent" presently used as an aid in medical termination of pregnancy. A second generation quick-swelling dilator (Isaptent II) has been developed and provides the desired degree of dilation of the cervix in 5-6 hours as compared to 10-14 hours with Isaptent I. Efficacy trial of Isaptent II has been successfully completed in about 100 cases and the Drugs Controller (India) has given marketing permission.

A process for the production of primaquine, the only drug available for treatment of relapses in malaria, starting from panisidine, was handed over by CDRI to a firm in Hyderabad, after establishing the optimal parameters for its production of bumetamide (diuretic) from chlorobenzoic acid was completed and released. The process for sulphametho-azole (antibacterial) was demonstrated to a firm in Calcutta. Work on the processes for metronidazole (antiprotozoal) starting from glyoxal, and for trimethoprim (antibacterial), both sponsored by a Bombay firm has been completed.

"Tromaril" N B Phenylethyl anthranilic acid is a potent non-steroidal anti-inflammatory and antirheumatic drug. Extensive animal studies have shown that its anti-inflammatory action is possibly related to its anti-prostaglandin action. Toxicological studies indicate that "Tromaril" has a wide margin of safety even on long term administration. Extensive clinical trials have confirmed its anti-inflammatory action in rheumatology and soft tissue inflammatory conditions. It has excellent gastric tolerance and has no toxic effects on vital organ systems. The drug is being produced and marketed on the basis of know-how developed by the Regional Research Laboratory, Hyderabad.

Production plant trials for the manufacture of 6-aminopenicillanic acid, a key intermediate in semisynthetic penicillin production, were carried out at Hindustan Antibiotics Ltd., Pune, with the immobilized penicillin acylase system developed at the National Chemical Laboratory, Pune in collaboration with the firm. The of the system established earlier in pilot plant trials. [as published]

A simple and convenient method for the isolation of vinblastine as its sulfate from the leaves of 'Vinca rosea has been worked out by NCL. The process has been optimised on 40 Kg per batch. About 1 g. of vinblastine sulfate can be isolated from 5 kg. of the leaves. Vinblastine sulfate is used for the treatment of Hodgkin's disease and other lymphomas. Very recently it has been shown that it can be used in the treatment of rheumatoic arthritis. A method for converting vinblastine to vincristine is now being worked out. Vincristine is a life-saving drug and is specifically used in the treatment of children's leukemia.

Quinapyramine sulphate and chloride (QSC) is a vital drug used in the treatment of Trypanosomiasis which is a fatal disease affecting domestic animals like cows, buffaloes, horses, camels, dogs, etc. The NCL process for the manufacture of QSC has been successfully demonstrated. The product made by the NCL process has been subjected to extensive field trials and found to be acceptable. A firm in Pune hopes to commence production of this drug early next year. The requirement of this drug is about 10 tonnes per annum valued around Rs 2 crore.

The agro-technology developed by the National Botanical Research Institute, Lucknow, for mass production of German Chamomile (*Matricaria chamomilla Linn.*) flowers to yield blue oil on distillation has been commercially exploited. The blue oil obtained on steam distillation of flowers, finds extensive use in pharmaceutical and flavouring industries.

Ergot production was started by the Central Indian Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, Lucknow on farmers' land in Kashmir Valley in collaboration with Indo-a firm in Bombay. The inputs were provided by the firm, while technical guidance and

inoculum were provided by CIMPA. It is estimated that about 7 tonnes of ergot valued at Rs 5.8 lakh would have been produced. Ergot was cultivated by farmers on a land where the farmers would have got a very poor yield of any other essential agricultural crop.

Lavender oil, produced from various species of *Lavandula* is one of the important essential oils used in perfumery and cosmetic industries. The entire requirement of the country was imported at an approximate cost of Rs 20 lakh per annum. The Research and Development Unit of CIMAP at Manasbal in Kashmir has been successful in the introduction of lavender on commercial scale and about 4-ha plantation has already been raised. The trials indicated that lavender oil would be produced in Kashmir Valley. This would be a boon to farmers in the Valley because it could be grown on poor soil. Similarly, lavandin, an essential oil bearing plant, has also been introduced and could be grown on such soils.

A new variety of hops "Commet" was released for commercial cultivation in Kashmir Valley. This year 85 tonnes of hops valued at rupees 65 lakh were produced in the Valley using RRL (Regional Research Laboratory), Jammu technical know-how. Three short-term training courses in cultivation of hops were conducted by the Laboratory. *Cloccimum* (the oil of which can substitute Clove oil), (released last year) has been brought under commercial cultivation in about 3.2 hectares of land in Jammu mainly to cater to the demand for its seed. Elite clones of *Dioscorea composita* were developed and 7000 rooted plants of this species were supplied to private growers in Maharashtra and N.E. India. Testing facilities and technical know-how were provided to mushroom growers of Kashmir Valley; 19000 bottles of spawn were also supplied leading to production of mushroom worth about Rs 12 lakh.

As a result of NBRI's work on betelvine cultivation and at its recommendation, the Government of Uttar Pradesh has decided to bring 'pan' cultivation under its 'Drought Prone Areas Programme' (DPAP) and extend all benefits and concessions to 'pan' growers.

In the area of post-harvest technology, the Central Food Technological Research Institute, Mysore has established its credibility by offering several turnkey jobs for the setting up of food processing and beverages industries, in various scales, both in India and abroad.

On the basis of consultancy provided by the Institute plans for the manufacture of energy food are being set up at Mysore, Raichur and Chitradurga. On the basis of know-how made available by the Institute commercial production of cocomass has been started by a Mysore firm. Surveys on food resources and infrastructural facilities in several States have been conducted by CFTRI and project reports for setting up of a fruit and vegetable product industries prepared. The institute is assisting Indonesia in setting up a post-harvest technology centre at Bogor under a World Bank assignment.

This centre houses a pilot plant as well as modern storage and infestation control laboratories.

The National Chemical Laboratory, Pune has made progress in the application of tissue culture for propagation of virus-free and disease-resistant plants. Using this technique, the laboratory has developed new methods or clonal developed of cardamom, teak, tamarind and banana.

Electronics—Devices and Materials; Instrumentation

A number of laboratories of CSIR are engaged in R&D related in this area--particularly as regards instrumentation in their fields of specialisation. However, the principal achievements are highlighted herein.

At the request of the Railway Design & Standards Organization (RDSO), (Ministry of Railways), Lucknow, research and development work on the project for the development of single phase-to-three phase converter for replacing the rotary converter used on WAM 4 locomotive was first initiated at CEERI, as a sponsored research programme.

The first prototype of the inverter was tested for satisfactory performance on a static locomotive in January 1977. Subsequently several tests were carried out by RDSO and CEERI, so that the equipment could be finally incorporated in the complete system of WAM 4 locomotives. Based on the suggestions of RDSO, engineering modifications were carried out from time to time on the first prototype and as per recommendations of the Review Committee, a Model A1 of the converter was fabricated and subjected to detailed trials on full load in the Ghaziabad Electric Loco Shed. In a parallel path, one of the WAM 4 Electric Locomotives (No 20462) was modified by the Indian Railways for incorporating the CEERI equipment.

During the first week of January 1981, Locomotive No 20462 was fitted with the CEERI converter and after successful tests with full load, it was subjected to road runs from Ghaziabad Loco shed to Khurja junction at speeds varying from 15 kmph to more than 115 kmph. The output voltage of the inverter was well within limits staying between 390 and 400 volts.

A programme of collaboration was entered into by NPL with a firm in Delhi for production of solar grade silicon, with the objective that eventually it may be possible to make solar grade silicon in the country on a large scale. The firm has started a production of trichlorosilane and this has been converted into polycrystalline silicon in NPL.

An electronic Comber Counter for comber machine used in textile industries has been developed by the Central Scientific Instruments Organization, Chandigarh as a substitute for the presently used mechanical system. The system developed incorporates digital circuits to counter and register the length of yarn in the comber machine. The device is useful in finding the efficiency of the combing process in textile industries. It has been tried by a textile machine making company at Coimbatore and the performance found satisfactory.

Cyroprobe developed at the National Physical Laboratory, New Delhi which has been effectively used for treatment of cataract and retinal disorders, etc. has

also been tried for treatment of tumours. However, one of the major difficulties encountered is its low destruction capability. A number of basic studies were undertaken to substantially increase the refrigeration capacity of the NPL-developed machine, without sacrificing the tip temperature, and the new machine developed by the laboratory gives 6-8 times more cooling capacity at -80°C. Initial trials conducted in a hospital both on cancerous and noncancerous tumours are encouraging.

A Minicardioscope, to enable instant diagnosis in cardiac emergencies, has been designed and developed by the Central Scientific Instruments Organisation, Chandigarh. It takes the ECG within a few seconds of placing it on the patient's chest. The instrument provides a new diagnostic concept with a portable, cordless, battery-operated electrocardioscope with integrated electrodes for direct application on the patient's thoracic region. It was put on extensive clinical trials at the Post Graduate Institute for Medical Education and Research (PGI), Chandigarh and its operation found satisfactory and useful.

A Cardiotocograph a sophisticated ultrasonic instrument for displaying and recording foetal heart rate and labour activity, developed last year at CSIO, has successfully undergone extensive clinical trials at PGI, Chandigarh.

DC Earth Resistivity Meter developed by the National Geophysical Research Institute Hyderabad is being manufactured by a firm in Hyderabad.

Technical know-how for production of Proton Precession Magnetometer and Shallow EM prospecting unit has been transferred by NGRI to a firm in Hyderabad under the agreement reached between the firm and the National Research Development Corporation of India.

Chemicals, Chemical Engineering

A number of laboratories have transferred to industry several processes for the production of chemicals used in wide-range industries. Also some of the laboratories offer process design and scale-up consultancy and technical aid for the production of industrial and agro-chemicals including pesticides.

A semi-commercial plant for the production of butenediol was commissioned by Hindustan Organic Chemicals Ltd. (HOC), Rasayani. This plant has a capacity of 150 tonnes per annum and is based on the work done in NCL in a joint development programme. The catalyst development and pilot plant studies were carried out in NCL. The process involves two major steps. The first step for the production of 2-butyne diol from acetylene and formaldehyde is working satisfactorily. Work on the second step of hydrogenation to produce butenediol will commence shortly. Subsequently, HOC proposes to install a plant of the capacity of 1500 tonnes per annum giving a product valued at Rs 7.5 crore annually.

Monocrotophos, an important systemic insecticide of organophosphorus group with high activity against aphids, mites and worms has been developed by RRL(H). Designs have been worked out for NOCIL, Bombay and another firm in industries Pune, who will set up their commercial plants with a capacity of 600 tonnes per annum with a turnover of Rs 5 crore.

Process design for a broad-spectrum insecticide (diaziznon) effective against a large variety of orchard, vegetable and soil pests, flies and bus has been given by RRL(H) to a firm in Pune. The capacity of the commercial plant is expected to be 250 tonnes per annum with a turnover of Rs 2 crore.

DDVP is an organophosphorus pesticide effective against household pests. Process know-how has been developed and demonstrated by NCL to firm in Pune. The commercial plant will have a capacity of 90 tonnes per annum with an annual turnover of Rs 2 crore.

The National Organic Chemical Industries Ltd. (NOCIL), Bombay entered into a very comprehensive engineering consultancy agreement with RRL, Jorhat for setting up an integrated plant for the production (100 kg/batch) of chlorfenvinphos - an effective pesticide against soil insects, root flies, root and cut worms, colarado beetle on rice and stem borers on maize, potato hoppers, leaf sugarcane and rice. The agreement included demonstration of the scaled up process know-how for generation of 300 kgs of technical chlorfenvinphos for consumer acceptability studies, preparation of basic design package for a commercial plant of 600 tpa and providing (optical) design engineering assistance during commercial production. An integrated semi-commercial plant of 100 kg/batch set up at RRL, Jorhat would provide data and basic designs for a commercial unit of 600 tpa capacity, NOCIL plans to set up the commercial plant in Maharashtra.

A collaborative research project between M/s. Balmer Lawrie Company Ltd., Calcutta and CLRI for scaling up of processes developed already at laboratory scale for the production of a range of synthetic fatliquors has been initiated during this year. This project involves payment of Rs 6.25 lakh by Balmer Lawrie to CLRI.

Glyoxal is a highly reactive dialdehyde used in the manufacture of textile auxiliaries resins and the drug inter-mediate methyl imidazole. The entire requirement of the chemical (about 2,000 tonnes/year) is being met by imports. Based on the process know-how and basic engineering package provided by RRL (H), two units have gone into production. The Laboratory scientists have helped in the successful commissioning of the plant. The product has gained acceptance from the major consumers of glyoxal.

A method for the production of tallow-like fat from castor oil used for soap making up a single step process has been developed and released by RRL(H) to NRDC for commercial exploitation. This is expected to replace imported tallow for soap making. A patent on this process has been filed.

Production plant trials for the manufac .ure of 6-amino-penicillanic acid, a key intermediate in semi-synthetic penicillin production were carried out at Hindustan Antibiotics Ltd., Pune with the immobilized penicillin acylase system developed at NCL in collaboration with the firm. The production scale runs confirmed the reuse potential and efficiency of the system established earlier in pilot plant trials.

A firm in Bombay has commissioned a 400 TPA plant for the manufacture of endosulfan at their factory on Thana-Belapur Road, based on NCL know-how. Endosulfan

is a widely used broad spectrum insecticide on many vegetables and food crops. Assistance for commissioning of the plant was provided by NCL. The annual value of production of endosulfan from this plant would be around Rs 4 crore.

A 100 TPA pilot plant for the manufacture of methyl chlorosilanes (based on NCL know-how) was installed and successfully operated by a Bombay firm at their site in collaboration with the laboratory. The designs of the reactor had been prepared by NCL and its performance has been highly satisfactory. NCL will now undertake work on the designs for the reactor of 1,000 TPA capacity.

Process know-how package on tartaric acid from tamarind leaves along with the demonstration data was released by RRL (Jorhat) to a Bangalore firm. The entire demand of our country (over 500 tonnes/annum) is being imported. In the first phase the factory will produce 100 tonnes of tartaric acid per annum.

A 660 tonne/hr. beta-naphthol plant (cost over Rs 1.3 crore) based on CFRI know-how of conversion of by product naphthalene of coke ovens has been put on stream in Bokaro. The plant has been set up under licence from NRDC which also supported the venture with financial assistance.

Anti-corrosion packaging paper is used for the prevention of corrosion of all types of ferrous items and engineering stores, such as components of bicycles, sewing machines, typewriters, refrigerators, small arms etc. The value of the demand for this paper is estimated at about a crore of rupees per annum and is expected to increase in the years to come. The inhibitive chemicals are dissolved either in water or a solvent and the paper to be coated is treated with this solution by roller coating technique in such a way that the coated paper is also dried during travel. The coated paper is later wound in rolls. This process know-how was demonstrated by CECRI to the representative of a Bombay firm satisfactorily.

Optimal conditions have been standardised on pilot plant scale by RRL(H) for the preparation of tristearin and stearic acid by simultaneous dehydration and hydrogenation of castor oil. A bench-scale process has been developed by CSMCRI to extract liquid wax from Jojoba seeds and obtain lubricating oil after their sulphurization.

The process of RRL, Jammu for the manufacture of gibberellic acid by submerged culture was transferred to a Bombay firm.

CSO: 4220/7637

RICHER PLANT NUTRIENT TESTS PROVE SUCCESSFUL

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 14 Aug 81 p 7

[Text] New Delhi, August 13--A plant growth nutrient capable of increasing agricultural production by 20 to 30 per cent will shortly be available in the market for use on a commercial scale.

Nicknamed the "magic potion," the nutrient could give a tremendous boost to the green revolution which has shown signs of flagging in recent years.

Vigorous tests on wheat, paddy and maize crops in Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh in the past three years have proved the remarkable qualities of the nutrient called mixtalol.

In Etah, wheat production in fields treated with mixtalol shot up by 27 per cent. In Andhra Pradesh, paddy yield increased by 27 to 50 per cent.

All that the farmer has to do is to spray his crops, with tiny amounts of mixtolol with water. A few drops will suffice in a bucket. The spraying should be so done that the crops drip with the mixtalol-treated water.

According to scientists of Hindustan Lever research centre at Andheri, Bombay, who discovered it, mixtalol does not affect the nutritional quality of the crops. In fact, it improves the protein in the grains.

The research centre has also done useful work in the chemistry of several minor oils--castor, linseed, sal, neem and karanja. Its most notable achievement has been the successful extraction of a substitute for cocoa butter, an expensive ingredient in high quality chocolate, from sal seed.

Sal seed is found in abundance in Orissa, Assam and Madhya Pradesh. Until the scientists lay their hand on it, it was used mostly by tribals in small quantities.

The seed yields a green-coloured oil with a pungent smell. By removing the colour and treating it with chemicals, it has been turned into creamy butter with the same qualities as cocoa butter.

CSO: 4220/7622

NATIONAL FERTILIZERS HEAD REVIEWS PLANS, PROGRESS

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 25 Aug 81 p 9

[Text]

NEW DELHI. Aug. 24.—A gas-based fertilizer plant is likely to be located in Madhya Pradesh and in all probability the project may go to National Fertilizers Limited. Although a final decision is yet to be taken, Mr B. S. Kakkar, managing director of NFL, is quite confident that his undertaking will get the project. Once the Centre clears it, NFL's plan is to construct the plant with "more Indian participation".

A small methanol plant with a daily capacity of 50 tons is in the final stages of clearance, according to Mr Kakkar. The Rs 7.50-crore plant would be located in Nangal where NFL has its complex.

NFL's thrust is now on diversification to industrial chemicals. The surplus ammonia and carbon dioxide at the Nangal plant is proposed to be supplied to a Punjab Government enterprise which is coming up nearby. The company's liquid fertilizer called Ankur has shown "excellent" results in trials. The Ministry of Agriculture had been requested to register Ankur under the Fertilizer Control Order.

Mr Kakkar felt that the offtake of fertilizers would come down, because of the recent price rise. Even in Punjab and Haryana, where the consumption was higher than other parts of the country, the rate of growth (of consumption) was likely to drop from 20% to 14% or 15%.

The NFL is to establish a network of agro-service centres in the northern and western parts of the country. A beginning is to be made with six such centres—three in

Punjab, two in Haryana and one in Jammu and Kashmir. A novel feature of the service centres will be subsidy for biogas and compost units.

Reviewing the performance of NFL plants in Panipat, Nangal and Bhatinda from April to July, Mr Kakkar said that the capacity utilization had averaged 68% against last year's 41%. Nitrogen production alone was 150% against the country's 176% for the period. Though the power position was better this year, coal stocks are still limited. The three plants had stocks for just one or two days. The company would like to have stocks for at least 10 days.

Referring to the financial position of NFL, Mr Kakkar said that though the performance of the company during 1980-81 was affected due to "extraneous" reasons, it earned a profit of Rs 97 lakhs during the first quarter of the year against the target of Rs 107 lakhs. "If the improvement in the availability of coal and power continues, the company expects to close the year 1981-82 with a profit of about Rs 15 crores", he said.

CSO: 4220/7631

AUTUMN WHEAT PRODUCTION LESS THAN EXPECTED

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 24 Aug 81 p 7

[Text] A study on 1981 rabi wheat output market arrivals and procurement shows that production was lower than the 'optimistic' official assumption of 6 million shows because of adverse weather conditions, reports PTI.

But it points out lower market arrivals need not necessarily be entirely due to lower production nor the price situation as both procurement and open market prices were higher in 1981 as compared to 1980 rabi.

The study, done by the Agricultural Economics Research Centre, Delhi University, in May last following the initial setback in official procurement operations, says lower market arrivals were more marked in Punjab which might be due to export of wheat to other States by private traders before movement restrictions were imposed.

While wheat started coming into markets in Haryana in the first week of April official agencies did not enter the market before 21 April while private traders were active even earlier the study says.

Private traders bought wheat on behalf of dealers in wheat deficit States such as Bihar Maharashtra and Rajasthan, they also bought wheat in anticipation of rise in price as they felt Government stock had dwindled.

The study, carried out in selected markets in Punjab and Haryana also finds increased stock holding by farmers for future sale and for domestic consumption. In spite of lower production there was increase in stocks with farmers as compared to previous year. In the case of large producers, two possibilities for decline in current sales might be under-reporting of production and hoarding in anticipation of future rise in prices. Also, big producers from Haryana directly sold their produce to traders in Narela market (in Delhi territory) which became "traders paradise" and where official agencies like the Food Corporation of India were not in the picture.

CSO: 4220/7628

ASSOCIATION REPORTS ON TRENDS IN POWER INDUSTRY

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 26 Aug 81 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, August 25--While the outlay on power increased from 7.6 per cent in the first plan to 19.8 per cent in the sixth plan, the achievements in physical terms fell far short of plan targets.

The achievement in the first plan was 84.6 per cent and in the fifth plan, it came down to 66.4 per cent.

The Association of Indian Engineering Industry (AIEI) has in a study of the power situation in India, covered the broad trends in installed capacity, generation, capacity utilisation, statewise and regionwise requirements, supply gap, consumption by industry, transmission and distribution losses and electricity tariffs.

The installed capacity and actual generation maintained an upward trend but the growth of this has been outstripped by the demand for electricity--thus leading to a substantial deficit of 15181 kwh in 1980-81.

Shortages were chronic during the fourth plan and were severest in 1979-80. The drastic shortages had their impact on industrial production which suffered a major setback during the same year. The power deficit in 1980-81 is estimated at 12.6 per cent.

The northern region showed the best growth in energy generation at 6.1 per cent, the western and southern regions improved marginally by 2.9 per cent, but the eastern region lagged behind suffering a negative growth of 7.3 per cent.

The all-India capacity utilisation stood at 42 per cent. Regionwise, the western region observed 47 per cent followed by the southern region 43 per cent. The other regions were considerably below the all-India average. Statewise capacity utilisation presents a rather dismal picture except for Delhi (60 per cent), Rajasthan (52 per cent) and Kerala (58 per cent). The majority of the states observed a capacity utilisation below 40 per cent.

The western region topped the list in the per capita consumption of power with 184 Kwh followed by the southern region (134 kwh). Once again the other regions lagged behind the all-India average of 130 kwh. The eastern region has experienced a continuous decline since 1977-78. Statewise, Delhi recorded the highest per capita consumption of electricity (381 kwh) followed by Chandigarh (322 kwh) and Punjab (314 kwh). Among the consumption was low at 114 kwh, even below the all-India average.

FOUR STATES NEGOTIATE WATER-SHARING AGREEMENT

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 26 Aug 81 pp 1, 7

[Text] The chief ministers of Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat signed a "Memorandum of Understanding" around midnight of Tuesday Wednesday on the sharing of Narmada waters in terms of the Narmada Tribunal Award of December 1979.

The chief Ministers of Maharashtra and Rajasthan--minor beneficiaries of the award--testified as witnesses in the presence of Union Agriculture and Irrigation Minister Rao Birendra Singh.

The accord was earlier discussed among Rao Birendra Singh and the four Chief Ministers--Mr Arjun Singh (MP), Mr Madhavsinh Solanki (Gujarat), Mr A. R. Antulay (Maharashtra) and Mr S. C. Mathur (Rajasthan) for about five hours.

Mr Singh later said MP and Gujarat would implement the Tribunal award in full.

Navagam Height

Apart from declaring commitment to full implementation of the tribunal's award, the "memorandum of understanding" also contains a specific assurance from Gujarat to Madhya Pradesh that the former would not build the "Sardar Sarovar" at Navagam in Broach district above the height stipulated in the award (full reservoir level at 455 ft with a maximum water level of 460 ft).

This obviously was deemed necessary because the height of the Navagam had been one of the main bones of contention between these States all these years.

The States have also agreed to explore the possibilities of mitigating to the maximum the losses of people displaced by the construction of the dam.

The implementation of the "memorandum of understanding" would be without prejudice to the rights and claims of the States of Maharashtra and Rajasthan, Rao Birendra Singh told newsmen.

Mr Rao said a long period of "uncertainty, mistrust and suspense" had ended with the signing of the accord. "I hope other States will take the cue and follow suit," he added.

Central Powers

The Minister said that utilisation of river waters was absolutely essential for speedy progress of the country. The Union Government was, therefore, thinking of bringing legislation in Parliament for acquiring some powers for the settlement of inter-State water disputes.

"Nearly nine-tenths of the country's 1440 million acre feet of water just goes down to the seas without any benefit to the people. So far, we have been able to create only a capacity to 130 MAF in our reservoirs. We can hope to add to it only up to 70 MAF by the year 2000. He would therefore congratulate the Chief Ministers of the four States for having taken the lead in such a vital matter," he said.

Later, Mr Arjun Singh said Mr Solanki had not only shown statesmanship, but magnanimity in reaching the accord.

Mr Solanki said the Narmada project is going to be a great national asset because of the agreement.

Mr Antulay and Mr S. C. Mathur also praised the spirit with which the agreement had been reached.

Background

The Narmada tribunal was appointed in 1969 under the Inter-State Water Disputes Act, 1956, on the complaint by Gujarat following a tangle created by the recommendation of a committee set up in 1964 by the Centre.

The committee, headed by the then Orissa Governor Dr A. N. Khosla, had, in its report submitted in September 1965, suggested that the Navagam dam should be 500 feet high. It assessed the flow of Narmada at 30.40 maf and recommended its apportioning as follows: Madhya Pradesh 15.6 maf, Gujarat 10.65 maf, Rajasthan 0.25 maf and Maharashtra 0.10 maf. The Khosla committee set apart 3.9 maf for power generation.

While Rajasthan and Gujarat had accepted the recommendation, MP and Maharashtra did not. This resulted in an impasse.

The tribunal, after on-the-spot inspections and hearing the States, presented its first award in August 1978. According to this, the Narmada flow was assessed at 28 maf which was distributed as: MP 18.5 maf, Gujarat nine maf, Maharashtra 0.25 maf and Rajasthan 0.5 maf.

CSO: 4220/7637

NO AGREEMENT ON WATER TRANSPORT WITH DACCA

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 26 Aug 81 p 3

[Text]

THE two-day India-Bangladesh official-level talks on inland water transport and transit, which concluded in Dacca last Saturday, failed to yield a new long-term protocol agreement between the two countries. The main reason for this failure is the proposed increase in rates by the Bangladesh inland water transport authorities for providing services to Indian transit vessels using Bangladesh riverine routes to go to the north-eastern Indian States, official sources said in Calcutta on Tuesday.

The other reason, according to these sources, for the protocol not being signed was that Bangladesh, despite verbally agreeing to provide a new transhipment point for Indian vessels in Sylhet, did not want to include this innocuous clause in a written agreement because of possible adverse political reaction from anti-India elements in that country.

With the Presidential election approaching and the anti-India mood still running high among some political parties, the present interim Government does not want to enter into any long term agreement which might embarrass the ruling political leadership.

Official sources said that Bangladesh had broached the proposal for a substantial increase in toll charges and rates for providing services like pilotage and conservancy, including river training and marking of navigation channels. Bangladesh's contention at the talks was that its inland water authorities were maintaining 300 route miles of waterways exclusively for the CIWTC vessels and what the Indian vessels were paying by way of various charges met only one-eighth of the cost

incurred for the upkeep of the waterway.

The Indian delegation maintained that higher differential rates for Indian vessels and cargo could not be charged as this was not the practice anywhere in the world. There were no differential port charges for vessels flying different flags. Bangladeshi vessels plied almost on all the routes used by Indian vessels and there was no exclusive Indian waterway in Bangladesh. The Indian side asked for the cost of input for maintenance of the waterways. But Bangladeshi officials maintained that it was their Government's prerogative to increase the charges unilaterally. The Indian side found the Bangladeshi stand unacceptable and said that it could not agree to a unilateral revision of charges without consulting Delhi.

India pays about Rs 150 lakhs annually as charges to Bangladesh for movement of its vessels through the latter's territory. About 330,000 tons of cargo are carried both ways by the vessels of the corporation through Bangladesh territory.

The only encouraging outcome of the Dacca talks was that both countries verbally agreed to provide each other additional points for transhipment or lifting of cargo. Bangladesh has agreed to provide Chhatak in northern Sylhet as a transhipment point for goods bound for the north eastern Indian States. This Bangladeshi town on Surma river is close to the Meghalaya border. It has a big cement factory whose limestone requirements are met almost entirely by supplies from the quarries in Meghalaya. The town has a good surface communication with India.

With the Kushiyara river fast silting up and making the CIWTC's service to Karimganj in Cachar inoperative for the better part of the year the granting of Chhatak as a transhipment point will ensure the flow of goods to the north-eastern States throughout the year along the less expensive Bangladesh river routes. At present during the lean summer and winter months, when the Kushiyara becomes unnavigable for the CIWTC vessels, goods bound for Karimganj have to be transported by expensive and circuitous road routes which cost Rs 1,400 a ton. The CIWTC vessels carry about 12,000 tons of cargo to and from Karimganj every year.

India has agreed to Bangladesh's request to open a steamer service from Rajshahi town to Dhulan in Mymensingh district for lifting of boulders. Private Bangladeshi vessels will regularly call at Dhulan to lift boulders which will be used for flood protection work in Bangladesh.

India's request for Daudkandi in Comilla for an additional transhipment point for Indian goods bound for Tripura was rejected by Bangladesh. Another request for the use of Dhaleshwari river by vessels bound for Dhubri was also turned down. The CIWTC vessels, which now take the Padma and the Yaruna route for going to Dhubri find the strong current in these rivers during monsoon months difficult to negotiate.

The present inland water transport and transit protocol, which expires on August 31, will be given an ad hoc extension by both the Governments whose representatives will meet in Delhi in November to discuss a long term protocol agreement.

CSO: 4220/7635

OIL MINISTER DESCRIBES RESPONSE FROM FOREIGN FIRMS

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 26 Aug 81 p 5

[Text] Petroleum Minister P. C. Sethi ruled out in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday transfer of any of the onshore or offshore blocks reserved for Oil India and Oil and Natural Gas Commission to the foreign companies for exploration, reports UNI.

The foreign companies would have to pick among the 32 blocks earmarked for them. The Oil India and ONGC were not in a position to work in these blocks because of paucity of funds. That was why the Government had invited foreign companies.

Therefore, "We do not intend to transfer any of the areas to the foreign companies" Mr Sethi clarified.

The Minister told Mr Ram Vilas Paswan that negotiations with the foreign companies which had made offer in respect of certain blocks were in the "finishing stage." It would not be in the public interest to disclose further details at this stage, he said.

Mr Sethi told Dr Subramaniam Swamy that the negotiations were conducted directly with the foreign companies and no commission agent was involved.

Asked whether it was true that response from foreign firms to the Government's invitation had been poor, Mr Sethi said out of the 35 shortlisted companies 23 companies showed interest and took away documents. However, the number of companies which had given the final bids was much less.

Mr Sethi disclosed that the Government of Mexico was also interested in taking up exploration work in one of the 32 blocks in Saurashtra. They were prepared to spend some money on initial survey. Negotiations were on in this connection.

Referring to sick wells, Mr Sethi said about 120 of 400 such wells were proposed to be repaired immediately with Soviet assistance. Details of the agreement were under negotiation. A Canadian firm would also help in restoration of the wells.

Mr Jagannath Rao asked whether the foreign companies were insisting on product sharing in the areas to be explored. Mr Sethi said the committee which had held the first round of talks with the foreign companies came to the conclusion that oil sharing would be demanded by all the companies. The percentage might vary but all of them would demand it. The Government would try to ensure that even if oil sharing was agreed to, it would not be in the form of oil. They may be allowed to take money leaving the oil in the country.

PETROLEUM MINISTER SPEAKS AT ONGC CELEBRATION

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 24 Aug 81 p 8

[Text]

DEHRA DUN, Aug 23 (PTI)

AN additional investment of more than Rs 1,400 crore is being provided in the sixth Plan to cover the accelerated programme of exploration and production of crude oil and natural gas from Bombay High and its satellite structures.

Disclosing this here at a function marking the silver jubilee of the Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC), Minister of Petroleum P C Sethi said that under the accelerated programme crude production from Bombay High was to be stepped up to 19.12 million tonnes in the next three years as against the present production of eight million tonnes per annum.

With the additional investment the total Plan outlay for the ONGC is expected to be about Rs 4,788 crores—one of the massive investments in recent years in oil exploration programme.

Stating that finance would be "no longer a problem" in hastening the exploration programme, Mr Sethi said possibilities of increasing the production of crude oil and gas existed in several other areas also and "these too are being pursued by us".

"Every opportunity for increasing the production of crude and gas has to be and will be pursued with utmost speed. In exploration too, we must hasten the pace. No prospect can be ignored", he said.

Counselling the ONGC that the very best equipment must be obtained quickly in the vigorous search for oil, Mr Sethi said: "I cannot today say we can be fully self-sufficient in oil and gas. But the prospect of achieving this cannot be dismissed".

Mr Sethi paid glowing tributes to the vision and foresight of Jawaharlal Nehru and K D Malaviya for the founding of the to find deposits of oil.

ONGC and said it was a measure of self-confidence not only in hydrocarbons but also in technology and systems. He was glad that the ONGC had decided to set up a research institute on offshore technology in the context of rapid development of crude oil production in offshore areas and discovery of highly prospective structures.

Several employees of the ONGC were felicitated at yesterday's function held at the sprawling institute of petroleum exploration of the ONGC.

Mr P T Venugopal, chairman of the ONGC, spoke of the ONGC instituting a chair in the Indian school of mines in sedimentation modelling and said: "ONGC has the strength to accomplish future programmes, although these are ambitious".

Speakers included Mr Lovraj Kumar, Petroleum Secretary, Col. S P Wahi, chairman-designate of the ONGC, Mr Jha member (material) of ONGC, and two former chairmen said it was now poised for taking up new challenges in making India self-sufficient in oil and self-reliant in technology.

Mr Neel made a mention of the possibilities of oil along the sub Himalayan range and Gangetic plain stretching from Punjab to West Bengal.

Mr Sethi said offshore production had now surpassed production from onshore areas. There was lot of scope for the ONGC

ONGC CONCERNED OVER POSSIBLE CUSTOMS CHARGES

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 27 Aug 81 p 23

[Article by S. T. Almeida]

[Text] Bombay, August 26. A proposal mooted by the Union finance ministry to impose customs duty on equipment required for the ONGC's offshore installations by extending customs jurisdiction is causing concern in the commission's staff.

While the government stands to gain from the levy by way of revenue, the inevitable paperwork would involve delays in the release of the equipment.

"It will be impossible for us to work peacefully," an ONGC source said, adding that even now it took six months for equipment to reach the installations from the time its requirement was notified to the finance ministry.

The ONGC's plea for a blanket exemption of the levy on offshore equipment has been rejected. The finance ministry has also not viewed favourably two other proposals: (a) imposition of the levy at a flat rate on a yearly basis and (b) exemption from the submission of a DGTD (directorate general of technical development) certificate and another certificate to prove that the value of goods imported conforms to the price certificate.

The DGTD certificate is given at the time the equipment is sought to be imported. But, in practice, the manufacturers often made useful modifications in the equipment at no extra charge. Correspondence with the DGTD regarding these modifications would be time-consuming.

For the purpose of the levy, the customs staff, it is feared, will hold up the equipment since such modifications will not figure in the DGTD certificate. They would like to be sure that the modifications do not alter the actual value of the product in the market. The ONGC officials will then have to spend a lot of time explaining technical and related aspects to customs men.

The ONGC source said the quick clearance facility granted to the defence forces and the atomic energy commission should also be extended to the ONGC as it was engaged in sophisticated operations crucial to the country's economy. It would be inadvisable to subject sophisticated equipment to the scrutiny of officials who knew little about such equipment and whose concern for formalities would prove detrimental to the ONGC's interests.

The imposition of the levy at a flat rate on a yearly basis against the submission of purchase documents would prevent procedural delays and also ensure revenue to the finance ministry.

On the basis of equipment imported last year, a sum of Rs 30 crores would have been collected as customs duty if it were leviable.

The Central Board of Revenue is keen on the imposition to shore up its revenues, an attitude on ONGC official characterised as "removing money from one pocket of the government and putting it into the other."

The petroleum ministry had opposed the proposal to charge the levy because of the inevitable delays, but the board's views prevailed, it is learnt.

The finance ministry has, however, made a concession by exempting certain items. The ONGC has been asked to specify which items should be exempted.

CSO: 4220/7640

ONGC OFFICIALS TELL PLANS FOR NAGALAND, ASSAM

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 27 Aug 81 p 9

[Text] Gauhati, Aug 26--The 25th anniversary of the ONGC in the eastern region marks a major achievement in putting Nagaland on the oil map for on-shore production. ONGC officials consider the Champang structure potentially rich with two wells currently in production.

The one within Nagaland is producing about 100 tons a day and the other nearby but in Assam about 50 tons. Certain political problems had cropped up, but were sorted out through discussions with the Nagaland Government in Kohima last May.

The chairman-designate of the ONGC, Mr Wahi, said that the current production of 1.7 million tons a year from the Assam fields would touch 4.1 million tons by 1985-86. This "real big push" envisages dynamic changes with a strategy for speed and efficiency and reorganization at various levels, including personnel. The funds for "optimization" were no problem, he stressed.

The ONGC officials at Nazira hope to increase the production to two million tons during this financial year. Production of four million tons in the latter half of the eighties could call for alternative arrangements to augment the flow in the pipeline from Duliajan to Barauni. ONGC officials prefer to cross their bridges when they come to them. The impression one gathered was that the pipeline could be "looped" over a larger segment to increase the output.

ONGC's record of expansion in the eastern region is impressive. Beginning with a oil-producing well in 1960 in the Rudrasagar structure, they have to date taken up 31 structures for drilling. The structures include Desangmukh, Rudrasag, Geleki, Borholla, Chargola and Baghmara and Gopinath Killa in Meghalaya. Fourteen rigs are being used for exploratory and development drilling. Sophisticated equipment including special drilling rigs are to be imported, although BHEL is in the picture with one of their rigs under commissioning in Andhra and another en route to Assam.

CSO: 4220/7643

ONGC TACKLES PROBLEM OF RESTORING OIL WELLS

Madras THE HINDU in English 26 Aug 81 p 8

[Article by C. V. Gopalakrishnan: "Rejuvenation of Oil Wells"]

[Text] With Canadian and Soviet assistance, ONGC is trying to activate the sick and idle oil wells in Gujarat whose production loss is estimated at about one million tonnes a year.

WHEN Mr P C Sethi Union Minister for Petroleum Chemicals and Fertilizers informed the Lok Sabha last week about the steps his Ministry was taking to activate the sick and idle oil production wells of the Oil and Natural Gas Commission in Gujarat he was not referring to a new problem which is confronting ONGC.

ONGC has had to grapple with this problem for quite a few years. A committee headed by K D Malaviya had drawn attention to the loss of oil production resulting from the presence of such sick wells and had recommended corrective action. It appears that the steps now being taken by the Government are a belated response to a bad situation which has existed for some time.

It may be mentioned that Malaviya who had headed the committee and submitted the report some time in 1973 later became the Minister for Petroleum and Chemicals. The committee had made a number of major recommendations for the reorganisation of ONGC. Very little was done either by him or his successors to implement them.

Cumulative loss

It is estimated that the oil lost from the lack of production from these sick wells might range anywhere between half a million and one million tonnes a year. The creeping sickness had been first reported way back in 1973 and even if the loss of oil could be assumed at the lower figure of half a million tonnes a year the cumulative

loss would have amounted to about 35 million tonnes. At current prices its value would be nearly Rs 700 crores.

Mr Sethi told the Lok Sabha last week that the total number of unproductive wells in Gujarat as on July 1, was 262. He had given another set of figures in March last when he said that ONGC had identified 235 sick wells which could be brought back to production. Out of these 150 wells were in Gujarat and 85 in Assam. The sickness had been spreading over the years.

As many as 139 wells had gone sick before 1979 while during 1979 and 1980 the additions were 46 and 50. Mr Sethi came out with still higher figures for sick wells during question hour in the Lok Sabha on August 25. He said that the total number of sick wells was 469 out of which 143 were in Assam, 325 in Gujarat and one in Arunachal Pradesh. In addition to the above, Assam Oil Company had shut down 263 non-producing wells in Digboi fields and Oil India have rested 24 poor producing wells. It was now proposed to repair 129 sick wells.

ONGC had been trying to nurse these sick wells back to health on its own by strengthening its teams servicing the wells. It had been purchasing specialised equipment and tools for production and stimulation from foreign sources including import of expertise and technology and by hiring foreign contractors. These efforts do not seem to have been very successful and ONGC has had to seek foreign assistance in a comprehensive measure.

There was response to its enquiries for such assistance from only Canada and the Soviet Union but not from Rumania and Hungary which had also been sounded. A contract has been signed with Nowesco of Canada for the activation of the sick wells in north Gujarat. The contract with Technoexport of the Soviet Union now being finalised provides for the repair of sick wells in south Gujarat and later the contract will probably cover the sick wells in Assam as well.

The Canadian firm Nowesco will supply equipment, spares and materials worth Rs 6 crores besides processing for job and design for 10 wells free of charge of their establishment in Canada. They will depute three experts for one year and train 16 ONGC employees in Canada for four months.

The estimated expenditure for the repair of the sick wells in south Gujarat under the contract with Technoexport of the Soviet Union is about Rs 3 crores which will be met from Soviet credits.

The proposed contract with Technoexport provides for the deputation of 30 Soviet experts to India for two years for putting the sick wells back to production.

Ageing factor

Ageing is a major contributory factor for oil production wells getting sick. When an exploratory well is drilled and later becomes a production well after it is established that it would give oil in commercial quantities, the sides of the well are protected from the surrounding environment right up to the depth of the oil zone. A steel casing is then sunk into the well and the oil is pumped to the surface through the steel tubing.

The first signs of the wells having aged is that extraneous matter like water, gas or sand begins to seep through when the surrounding cementation develops cracks. The oil flow may even be completely choked if the sand particles accumulate and harden and block the entry of the oil.

The repair operations in such cases consist in re-cementing and sealing off the cracks. However a drop in the oil-flow or its total choking may not be due to the spreading of cracks in the cementation and the hardening of sand particles.

They may result from other obstructions to the flow of oil from the rocks on account of subterranean environmental changes. In such cases the job facing the oil technologists is to clean the entry points by special techniques for fracturing the oil-bearing rocks to create more conduits for the flow

of oil. The techniques available for this "rejuvenation" operation are known as acidisation and hydro-fracturing.

This is a major operation and highly sophisticated equipment is required to carry it through successfully. Both hydrofracturing and acidisation call for the erection of trailer-mounted high-pressure pumps at the surface for the pumping of the liquid fracturing elements mixed with water and chemical additives.

A great deal of detailed engineering has to be gone through before this operation can be undertaken. The ONGC's Institute of Reservoir Studies in Ahmedabad and the Institute of Petroleum Exploration in Dehra Dun have developed the capabilities for such engineering.

In fact the repair and rejuvenation operations which the Soviet and the Canadian experts will be carrying out for ONGC under the contracts signed with them will very much depend upon the engineering studies being done by RS and IPE.

Borehole TV camera

A problem which had handicapped drilling technologists earlier was the impossibility of carrying out a visual check of the conditions of the exploratory or production wells going deep into the bowels of the earth. Fears that the cementation or the steel tubing might have cracked or become weak could be confirmed only by the indirect evidence coming from the drop in impairment or the total stoppage of the flow of oil to the surface. But this handicap is now being overcome.

A borehole television camera has been developed and it is sunk into the oil well to photograph the conditions of the cementation as well as the steel tubing and display them on a screen in the control room.

This borehole TV camera is being produced by Schlumberger of the United States. It is also used to photograph the state of fissures in the oil-bearing rocks to enable the drilling technologists to widen them by the use of special techniques if this is considered necessary.

The TV camera also gives clear pictures of the angle of repose of the rocks and it helps the technologists to assess how much oil could be produced from the well and whether the flow could be stepped up.

Appropriate technology

The choice of Nowesco of Canada for the services ONGC needs to repair and rejuvenate its sick and idle wells is

regarded as particularly appropriate. In the West Asian oil producing countries, the rate of oil production runs to a few thousand barrels a day and the techniques they seek to activate their sick wells are far more specialised as they are aimed at stepping up the rate of production by a much bigger amount.

But in Canada the rate of oil production is about the same as in the onshore wells in India not exceeding 700 to 1000 barrels a day. Canada has therefore developed technology for stepping up the flow of oil by about 50 to 100 barrels a day.

Both the US and Canada now attach great importance to the recovery of incremental oil in view of the high savings it can mean. This is a technology which is appropriate to India as it is in the same category. As for the assistance from Technoexport of the Soviet Union, it will be coming as part of the 10-year plan for the intensification of exploration and production in India.

ONGC is hoping that the repairing and rejuvenation of the sick and idle wells should yield an incremental oil of about one million tonnes a year, if not more. At current international prices this would mean a reduction in the import bill by about Rs 220 crores.

CSO: 4220/7636

PLANS TO SWAP BOMBAY HIGH CRUDE FOR MIDEAST OIL TOLD

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 14 Aug 81 pp 1, 7

[Article by G. K. Pandey]

[Text]

NEW DELHI, August 13.

THE Union government is understood to have decided to swap one to 1.5 million tonnes of Bombay High (BH) crude with West Asian crude in the next ten to 12 months, it is authoritatively learnt.

The Indian Oil Corporation, oilising agency for import of crude and petroleum products, has been asked by the petroleum ministry to issue international bids for swapping the BH crude.

The need for bartering the BH crude had arisen because pumping of this highly wax crude to Mathura refinery is likely to pose a serious problem during the winter months. The six-million-tonne Mathura refinery is slated to go on stream in October.

The government has engaged the well-known Italian firm, Snam Progetti, as consultants for resolving the problem of transporting the waxy BH crude to Mathura. According to petroleum experts, it may take nearly one year to overcome this problem.

FUEL OIL SHORTFALL

Bartering of the BH crude is not likely to pose any problem since the low sulphur crude is very much in demand the world over.

Sources here point out that swapping of the BH crude with the West Asian crude would also be beneficial for the country. It would help to make up for the serious gap in the availability of lubes, fuel oil and bitumen.

The anticipated fuel oil shortfall this year is one million tonne. Total 100,000 tonnes and bitumen 300,000 tonnes.

The BH crude is excellent for giving

high-yielding middle distillates such as motor gasoline, high-speed diesel, kerosene and aviation turbine fuel. But yields of heavier ends, like bitumen and fuel oil, are low.

Although the petroleum ministry has not specified the West Asian crude to be bartered for the BH crude, preference is likely to be accorded to the Arab light.

It is priced lower than all other crudes in the world market. It is ideal for getting higher yields of lubes, fuel oil and bitumen. Besides, it will pose no problem in transporting it through the pipeline to Mathura even during the winter months.

While arrangements are being made for swapping the BH crude, the government has simultaneously taken steps to create additional refining capacity in the country to process the BH crude.

The production of oil from Bombay and adjoining areas is expected to go up to 19 million tonnes by 1983-84 from the existing level of 14 million tonnes.

To match this increase in production of oil from Bombay High and its satellites, a package plan for the expansion of various refineries is under implementation. All these expansion schemes are scheduled to be completed by 1983-84.

The Bharat Petroleum Corporation's refinery at Bombay is being expanded to process six million tonnes of BH crude. Cochin refinery 4.5 million tonnes, Madras refinery 2.8 million tonnes, Visag 4.5 million tonnes, Mathura three million tonnes and Koyall 1.5 to 2 million tonnes.

SETHI ANSWERS QUESTIONS ON PETROLEUM REVENUES

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 25 Aug 81 p 19

[Excerpt] The revenue from the recent increase in the prices of petroleum products is estimated at Rs 1,070 crores a year, exclusive of the sales tax.

In a written answer, the petroleum minister, Mr P. C. Sethi, said the state governments would get an additional Rs 85 crores a year by way of sales tax due to the hike in petroleum product prices.

Mr Sethi said there would be no outgo of foreign exchange because the recent price increase was due to a revision in the price of indigenous crude oil.

Replying to another question, Mr Sethi said the total import bill for crude oil in the current financial year, was estimated at Rs 3,672 crores compared to Rs 3,302 crores in the previous year.

He said the total quantity of crude to be imported in the current year was estimated at 15.6 million tonnes as against 16.25 million tonnes imported last year.

The total indigenous production of crude this year was expected to be 15.90 million tonnes, nearly 5.4 million tonnes more than in the previous year.

Answering another question, Mr Sethi said the oil companies had already started releasing 100,000 new gas connections a month since March. It was expected that 1.2 million new gas connections would be released by various oil companies during first quarter of 1981 and March, 1982.

CSO: 4220/7630

ASSAM OIL PRODUCTION LOWERED BY AGITATION

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 27 Aug 81 p 5

[Text] Nazira, Assam, Aug 26 (UNI)--India suffered a loss of 3.44 million tonnes of crude oil in 1980 because of the disturbed situation in the North Eastern region, especially in Assam, reports UNI.

Statistics released by the Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC) here revealed that the production of oil which had slowly risen to 12.84 million tonnes in 1979, dwindled to 9.4 million tonnes, the next year owing to problems related to the aliens' issue.

The current level of ONGC's crude oil production in the Eastern region which is 1.70 million tonnes is planned to be stepped up to about 4.10 million tonnes annually by 1985-86.

ONGC Chairman-designate Col S. P. Wahi who attended the Commission's silver jubilee celebrations at Nazira Oil Fields told newsmen that the production in the Eastern region was further planned to be stepped up to 4.86 to 5 million tonnes annually by the end of 1990-91.

By the end of the current year, production is expected to reach 2 million tonnes.

Col Wahi, who is at present ONGC's officer-on-Special duty (OSD) said that the production was envisaged to be stepped up by means of drilling 175 exploratory and 465 development wells during the next decade in the Assam-Arakan Basin, Nazira depression, Dhansiri valley in Assam and in the Nagaland foothill belt close to Desang thrust and in the northern bank areas of the Brahmaputra.

The number of rigs in operation in the region was planned to be increased to 19 by 1984-85 against 14 operating at present including in Cachar.

The ONGC in the region is currently supplying gas to the Assam State Electricity Board for their Maibella project at Lakwa and Mibile sets at Geleki. A small portion of the associated gas from Lakwa, Geleki and Amguri fields was also being supplied locally to serve Assam tea gardens. Till the end of July this year 40.81 million cubic metres of gas had been supplied to various consumers at a daily average of 0.12 million cubic metres.

STEEL MINISTER SAYS ERA OF SHORTAGES OVER

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 25 Aug 81 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, August 24. The era of steel shortages is over and the country has entered an era of plenty. This was stated today by the Union ministry of steel and mines, Mr Pranab Mukherjee.

Inaugurating the annual general meeting of the Steel Re-rolling Mills Association, Mr Mukherjee said the production of steel in the first quarter of the current financial year had gone up by 25 per cent. Between April and July, the steel mills produced 1.625 million tonnes against 1.295 million tonnes during the corresponding period last year.

Judging from the trend of production, the minister hoped that steel production during the current year would be substantially higher.

Regarding the planning of raw material supplies for the re-rolling industry, Mr Mukherjee said in view of the substantial increase in the indigenous production of billets and rerollables, as also the facility for imports under the open general licence, it was not necessary to continue this system.

However, so far as the long-range programme was concerned, the needs of the re-rolling industry were being borne in mind while planning the product mix of new steel plants. He said the Visakhapatnam steel plant would produce 1.64 lakh tonnes of billets per annum.

Referring to the revision of import duties on billets, bars and rods, the minister said protection from excessive imports had been afforded to the rerolling industry as had been done to mini-steel plants and billet producers.

He rejected a plea for subjecting billets, pencil ingot, bars and rods to the joint planning committee pricing from which they had been taken out.

CSO: 4220/7630

REPORTER VISITS DEMONSTRATION SPONGE IRON PLANT

Madras THE HINDU in English 26 Aug 81 p 8

[Article by S. Parthasarathy: "Sponge Route to Steel on Trial"]

[Text]

ONE strategy to step up production capacity for different grades of steel is manufacture from scrap using electric arc furnaces. According to the International Iron and Steel Institute, Brussels, nearly 127 million tonnes, constituting 20 per cent of the world's steel production, come from these furnaces.

There are quite a few ministeel plants in India using scrap. There are major constraints on steel production through the EAF route. These include the shortage of good quality melting scrap and insufficient and unstable supply of electric power.

Sponge iron production at Palaoncha (near Kotegudem in Andhra Pradesh) using non-coking coal as the reducing agent, holds out the promise of increased reliance on the direct reduction electric arc furnace method.

Among the three sponge iron plants based on solid reductant being set up in Orissa, Bihar and Andhra Pradesh the last one has been in production for some time.

The sponge iron route of steel making is of interest to India because there are large deposits of iron ore and non-coking coal. The Andhra Pradesh sponge iron plant, constructed by Sponge Iron India Ltd (SIL), a joint undertaking of the Union and State Governments, is a demonstration project to study the reducibility characteristics of the ores on a semi-commercial scale. It is supplying sponge iron to a few ministeel units including the continuous casting steel plant owned and operated by the Tamil Nadu Government at Arkonam.

Engineers at Palaoncha explained to the correspondent during a recent visit that India has to depend on non-coking coal to produce sponge iron unlike for

example, Indonesia which is experimenting with a gaseous reductant. India does not have large resources of natural gas. Already in semi-commercial production the SIL plant is expected to be the forerunner of regular commercial plants.

The SIL plant has facilities to prepare and process raw materials and has adequate instrumentation with controls to deal with a wide range of feed stock. Since several countries are looking for solutions to the scarcity of coking coal, UNIDO which assisted SIL, proposes to develop it as a regional centre for direct reduction studies.

Although the industrial technology of sponge iron was only recently developed, production of sponge iron is the oldest known method of obtaining iron.

The first ministeel plant to use the Palaoncha sponge iron was that at Arkonam. According to engineers there the sponge iron supplied to them is excellent feed material and superior to Indonesian sponge iron. At the moment up to 20 per cent of the total feed material is sponge iron. The proportion cannot be increased with the present system of batch charging of the furnace. Some modifications are to be carried out to introduce continuous charging to double the use of sponge iron. SIL is likely to help in the modification programme.

The price of sponge iron is almost the same as the delivered price of imported scrap — about Rs 1500 a tonne. Indigenous scrap costs more. There is no contamination in sponge iron and it is as good as pedigree scrap, the engineers point out. But energy consumption is slightly higher and the slag volume is more.

The Arkonam plant with an installed capacity of 50,000 tonnes is taking steels

to double its capacity at a cost of Rs 12 crores. A bar mill costing Rs 4 crores is likely to be established. Other diversifications include alloy steel billet manufacture. There is a proposal to put up a sponge iron plant nearby to serve as a captive unit. SAIL is ready to offer knowhow.

How does the economics of producing steel in integrated steel plants compare with that in electric arc furnaces?

The capital cost for a modern steel plant of half a million tonne capacity producing steel by the arc furnace route using sponge iron is placed at less than Rs 200 crores. The facilities will include sponge iron making, thermal power plant and steel plant with arc furnace and continuous casting arrangements. The capital cost per tonne of billet for EAF will work out to about Rs 3000 against Rs 5000 or so in the case of a new integrated steel plant like that at Visakhapatnam.

The gestation period for an arc furnace plant is short. It has been established by advocates of the sponge iron method that the cost of production (including profit on the equity investment at 25 per cent post tax) in a half million tonne plant will not be more than Rs 2300 per billet tonne. This compares favourably with the cost of Rs 2650 per billet tonne for a new integrated steel plant where a lower rate of profit on equity is assumed.

The main advantages of the EAF process are lower investment, shorter gestation, lower production cost, flexibility on plant location, greater suitability for making special grades of steel and use of the abundant noncoking coal reserves.

CSO: 4220/7636

MINISTER INTERVIEWED ON PROBLEMS OF RAILWAYS

Madras THE HINDU in English 14 Aug 81 p 9

[Interview with Kedar Pande, railway minister, by THE HINDU, on 12 August 1981, place not given]

[Text]

PATNA Aug 13

The railways are shortly sending expert teams to the Soviet Union and Japan to study the measures taken by the two countries to minimise accidents.

Gravely concerned over the growing frequency of accidents, the railway administration is also examining the possibility of installing special mechanical devices if any to prevent accidents.

Stating these during an hour-long interview with THE HINDU yesterday the Railway Minister Mr. Kedar Pande said: We have directed the expert teams going to Russia and Japan to find out what steps have been taken there to make rail travel safe.

A high-power committee, headed by the Railway Board adviser Mr. B. D. Pande has also been asked to recommend steps to minimise accidents.

The Minister admitted that lack of proper maintenance of track, engines and rolling stock was largely responsible for the recurring railway accidents.

Staff slack: It had also been brought to his notice, he said, that railway employees concerned were slack in their work of maintaining track. Steps were under way to bring about discipline

among these staff and improve their efficiency.

Efforts are also being directed towards modernising the railways and as an integral part of this, the vital process of computerisation has already been launched in different sectors. Mr. Pande said.

The Minister said he was examining the recommendations of the railway safety committee and he would ensure that these were implemented soon.

Mr. Pande attributed the lack of punctuality of trains in the Hindi States to the poor law and order situation in the region. Preference of goods and ticketless travel were also rampant in this region.

Old stock: He said of the total stock of 25,000 coaches 7,000 had become old and rickety. These had to be repaired or replaced. But this could not be done overnight.

We need more coach repair workshops and coach factories—one coach factory would shortly be set up near Allahabad.

Similarly 300 of a total fleet of 7,000 steam locomotives had been withdrawn because they had become unfit for service. Steam engines were being gradually replaced by electric or diesel engines.

The Minister claimed considerable

improvement in goods traffic since he took over in November last year. As a result of this, he hoped the railway budget surplus this year may go up to about Rs 150 crores.

In all 314,000 wagons had been pressed into service to carry freight to different destinations.

Record bettered: He said goods traffic had surpassed even the Emergency record. During the Emergency the number of days per turnaround was 13. Now it was 12.7 days.

Mr. Pande who is giving priority to boosting freight earnings said I am of the view that passenger fares should not be increased. The railways should increase revenue by boosting goods traffic which accounts for 60 per cent of total revenue.

He claimed that for the first time in the history of Indian railways a revolution in freight traffic was underway.

Preference: To eliminate preference of goods the Railway Protection Force was being overhauled and trials were being taken to ensure better coordination between RPF and State police. A meeting of railway officers and State Government representatives would be held shortly to discuss steps to bring about better coordination. Mr. Pande said.

CSO: 4220/7624

BRIEFS

ALLOY PROJECT COSTS--The Super Alloys Project of the public sector Mishra Dhatu Nigam Limited, Hyderabad, is likely to cost four times the original estimate, according to latest indications, reports PTI. The cost had to be drastically revised upwards within a short period, first from Rs 30.85 crores in August 1973 to Rs 76.10 crores in October 1974, and then to Rs 89.85 crores in July 1975. It is now likely to cost Rs 134 crores. According to the report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG), the project was taken up without preparing a detailed project report. Nor was the financial viability of the project established. The project was intended for the manufacture of important special metals and super alloys required for aeronautics, electronics, rockets missiles and instrument industries. [Text] [New Delhi PATRIOT in English 24 Aug 81 p 8]

ASSISTANT NAVY CHIEF--Rear Admiral K. K. Nayyar has taken over as the Assistant Chief of Naval staff at Naval headquarters according to an official release on Sunday. He was earlier the commandant of the Eastern Naval fleet. A specialist in Naval communications, Admiral Nayyar has distinguished himself in many important and prestigious appointments. [Text] [New Delhi PATRIOT in English 24 Aug 81 p 7]

SINDHI PROBLEMS STUDIED--Bombay, August 25--The chairman of the minorities commission, Mr Justice M. H. Beg, has promised to look into the problems of linguistic minorities, including the Sindhi community. This assurance was given by Mr Justice Beg to Mr Nari H. Gursahani, president of the All-India Sindhi panchayats' federation, when the latter called on him at Raj Bhavan here yesterday. Mr Gursahani had earlier presented a memorandum of demands to the chairman. Among the demands were the establishment of a Sindhi academy in Maharashtra, non-interference with the educational institutions run by the minority group, and adequate representation of the community in the state legislative council, zilla parishad and other state bodies. [Text] [Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 26 Aug 81 p 12]

BIHAR CABINET RESHUFFLE--Patna, Aug 25--Bihar Chief Minister Jagannath Mishra tonight reshuffled the portfolios among his 39-member Council of Ministers. While reallocating the portfolios the Chief Minister allowed four of the 18 Cabinet Ministers retain their old departments. They are Ramashray Prasad Singh (Industry and Parliamentary Affairs) Dr Umeshwar Prasad Verma (Health), Mr T. Nuchi Lal Mehta (Forest) and Mr Chansaram Mahto (Agriculture and Relief). Chief Minister distributed three of the nine portfolios held by him so far.

They are: Science and Technology which has been given to Mr Sami Nadri, Law has been allocated to Mr Jagnarain Trivedi and Information and Public Relations Mr Yogeshwar Prasad Gogesh. Now the six departments Chief Ministers: Finance, Planning and Development, Irrigation and Power Cabinet Secretariat, Coordination, Home (except prison), and Administrative Reforms. [Text] [New Delhi PATRIOT in English 26 Aug 81 p 4]

CENTRAL RULE FOR ASSAM--Parliament on Tuesday gave its approval to the imposition of President's rule in Assam after the Opposition staged a walkout in the Rajya Sabha, protesting against the refusal to put off a discussion at the fag end of the day. After the walkout by all except the AIADMK and the DMK, the House approved the President's rule by voice vote and returned the State's budget for 1981-82. It has already been passed by the Lok Sabha. The walkout came after an hour-long procedural wrangling during which Deputy Chairman Sham Lal Yadav requested the members to continue the discussion till 6 p.m. The Opposition members felt this would rob them of ample opportunity to express their views on the issue and pointed out the House had already sat half an hour extra. Mr Era Sezhian (JP), Mr Dinesh Goswami (Ind), Mr P. Ramamurthi (CPI-M) and Mr N. P. Nanda (Cong-U) raised technical objections against the promulgation of President's rule in Assam, but these were disallowed by the Chair. Later the House began discussion on the State's budget and the statutory resolution moved by Home Minister Zail Singh. [Text] [New Delhi PATRIOT in English 26 Aug 81 p 5]

AMBASSADOR TO EGYPT--Mr Alfred Sylvester Gonsalves, presently High Commissioner of India to Tanzania has been appointed ambassador of India to the Arab Republic of Egypt in succession to Mr Kizhake Palat Sankara Menon, according to an official release, reports UNI. [Text] [New Delhi PATRIOT in English 26 Aug 81 p 5]

AMBASSADOR TO SWEDEN--Mr Kamal Bakshi, till recently Joint Secretary to the Prime Minister has been appointed India's ambassador to Sweden it was officially announced in New Delhi on Tuesday, reports UNI. [Text] [New Delhi PATRIOT in English 26 Aug 81 p 5]

PETROLEUM MINISTRY PANEL--A scientific advisory committee has been constituted in the Petroleum Ministry, Petroleum Minister P. C. Sethi told the Lok Sabha on Tuesday during question hour, reports UNI. The committee will advise on policies relating to science and technology and measures to implement them to ensure optimum processing of hydrocarbon raw materials for use as fuels and chemicals. The term of the committee will be initially for a period of two years, he said. Diesel: the estimated cost of diesel likely to be imported during 1981-82 is about Rs 727 crores. The quantity of diesel imported during April-July 1981 was about 0.5 million tonnes and the quantity likely to be imported during August 1981 to March 1982 was estimated to be 1.9 million tonnes. Letters of intent: five State Industrial Development Corporations have been granted letters of intent for setting up polyester staple fibre units in Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. Mr Sethi informed that the Government has approved expansion programmes of coastal refineries and has referred the revised cost estimates of Cochin and Visakhapatnam refineries for clearance by the Public Investment Board. [Text] [New Delhi PATRIOT in English 26 Aug 81 p 5]

JAGUAR IN 1983--Mr Patil said the Indian Air Force would receive the Jaguar aircraft, being assembled by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, in 1982-83. He told Mr M. V. Chandrashekara Murthy that it would not be in the public interest to disclose how many Jaguars would be delivered to IAF during 1981 and 1982. Mr Patil also said the comparative naval strength of the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. in the Indian Ocean was known to the government but it would not be in the public interest to disclose this information. [Excerpt] [Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 27 Aug 81 p 6]

EDIBLE OIL DUTY--New Delhi, August 26 (PTI)--The Lok Sabha today approved the inter-session ordinance increasing the basic customs duty on vegetable oils and allied products from 40 per cent to 200 per cent after Mr R. Venkataraman, finance minister, defended the measure as designed to mop up unconscionable private profits. The house also passed a bill to replace the enabling ordinance with an act of parliament. (The effective duty has been notified at 150 per cent). Mr Venkataraman assured the house the consumer prices would not go up because the State Trading Corporation, which had now become the channelling agency, would pay only 5 per cent duty and distribute the imports through public distribution agency on no-profit-no-loss basis. Mr T. R. Shamanna, (Janata) challenged this and said the consumer prices had gone up by Rs 2 a kilo after the promulgation of the ordinance. [Text] [Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 27 Aug 81 p 7]

JANATA PARLIAMENTARY CHIEF--New Delhi, August 26 (UNI)--Mr Madhu Dandavate and Mr Piloo Mody were today elected unopposed leader and deputy leader, respectively, of the Janata parliamentary party. The two new general secretaries are Dr M. M. S. Siddhu (Rajya Sabha) and Mr C. K. Parulekar (Lok Sabha). There will be polling tomorrow to fill the post of another deputy leader. According to a party release, Mr Ratansinh Rajda, a candidate for general secretaryship, had withdrawn his nomination earlier. [Text] [Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 27 Aug 81 p 7]

EXPORT-IMPORT BANK--New Delhi, August 26 (UNI)--The Rajya Sabha today returned the export-import bank of India bill, 1981, paving the way for the establishment of an institution for providing financial assistance to exporters and importers. The Lok Sabha has already passed the bill. Replying to the debate on the bill, the deputy finance minister, Mr Maganbhai Barot, said this bank would provide finances, ideas and information to importers and exporters under one roof. Mr Barot assured the house that the monopoly houses would not be allowed to enjoy the benefits of the bank. The small-scale units would have greater benefits. He said the bank would be under the supervision of the Reserve Bank of India and the finance ministry. [Excerpt] [Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 27 Aug 81 p 12]

ASSAM REFUGEE STATISTICS--A total of 2,14,318 persons registered themselves as refugees in Assam between 1 April 1964 to 25 March 1971, Minister of State for Home Yogendra Makwana told Mr R. N. Rakesh in a written reply in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday, reports PTI. [Text] [New Delhi PATRIOT in English 27 Aug 81 p 5]

AIR SQUADRON COMMANDERS--Four air marshals have been appointed commodore commandants of various squadrons of the air force, reports UNI. They are Air Marshal L. M. Kadre, 17 Sqn, Air Marshal B. W. Chauhan 48 Sqn, Air Marshal M. S. D. Woollen PVSM, VM (28 Sqn) and Air Marshal M.J.M. Dotiwala (14 Sqn.) The commodore commandants are appointed to foster esprit de corps in the squadrons and advise them on matters relating to the welfare of personnel, memorial, custom, tradition dress, colour and crest a Defence Ministry release said on Wednesday. [Text] [New Delhi PATRIOT in English 27 Aug 81 p 7]

NEW GRAIN VARIETY--Pune, August 27--A new strain of bajra with an attractive white colour, a sweet taste and a richness in protein content has been evolved by scientists working on the millet research project of the Indian Council of Agriculture Research here. The new variety is expected to be preferred even by people of the middle and upper classes. The new strain of bajra produces as much grain as the currently used BJ-104, which produces 21 quintals per hectare. It is felt that there will be an increasing demand from the public for this new variety, possibly necessitating the growing of this bajra even under irrigated conditions which is not in vogue now. Another new variety of bajra, MH-936, has been found to be promising as it is resistant to the Downy Mildew disease, which had almost wiped out the entire crop all over the state in recent years. Also, this variety gives 15 per cent more yield than the prevalent BJ-104. [Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 28 Aug 81 p 4]

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